

ALL CLASSES OF INSURANCE TRANSACTED

**MOTOR UNION INSURANCE COMPANY LTD**

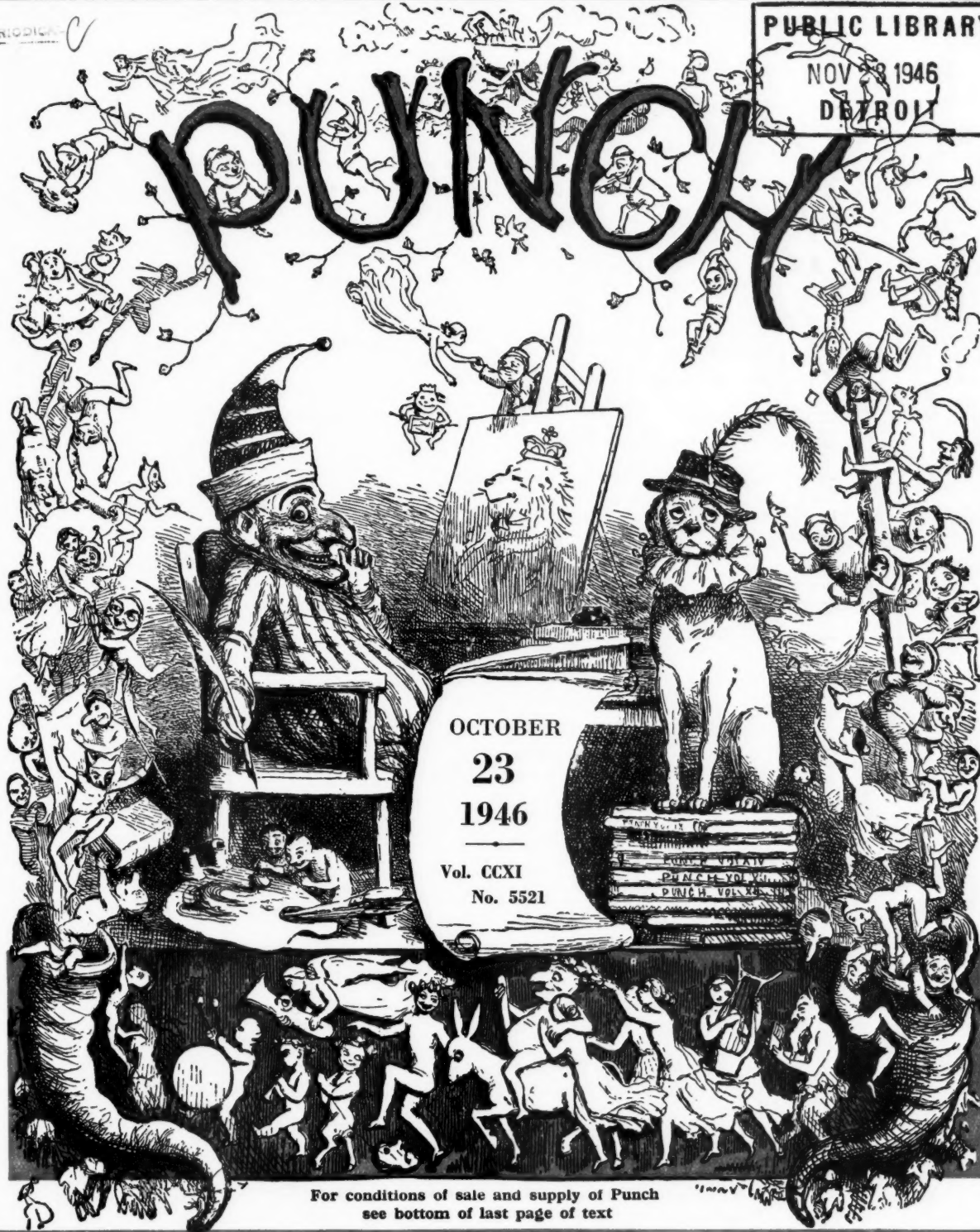
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DETROIT



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch  
see bottom of last page of text

**Imperial Typewriters**MADE IN  
GREAT BRITAIN



**Sharp's** SPECIALISE IN MAKING **TOFFEE**

EDWARD SHARP & SONS LTD.  
OF HAIDSTONE, KENT  
"THE TOFFEE SPECIALISTS"



**Children grow  
strong on Virol**

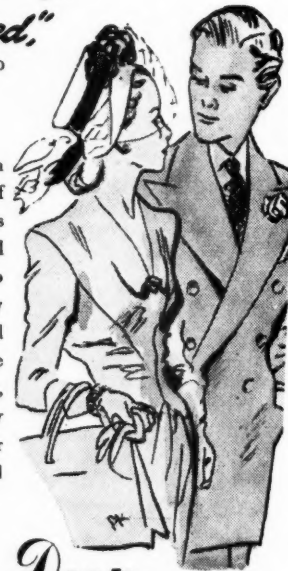
VIROL COMPLETES THE DIET

she wears her prettiest dress and a flattering hat,

but "... darling,  
you look tired."

HE SAID

A man, in his tenderness, can strike a blow at the happiness of a pretty woman; for she knows that a tired look means an old look. So it's never too early to start using Skin Deep faithfully day and night. Skilfully blended with oils closely resembling the natural ones in your complexion, Skin Deep is really good for your skin. It's a lovely, lasting powder base by day and a rich skin food by night.



**Skin Deep**

BEAUTY CREAM

FOR DAY AND NIGHT USE

ATKINSONS OF OLD BOND STREET, W.1 ASD 18-1070-100



When you're tired, eat biscuits. They'll soon restore your flagging energy. Biscuits provide nourishment without waste —no-one wastes biscuits. They keep, and keep you going.

**BISCUITS**  
*keep you going*

Issued by the Cake and Biscuit Manufacturers War Time Alliance Ltd.

## Locker-room Sensation



POPULAR  
NOV. 9

"HENRY," said Mr. Chipshott, "something magical has just manifested itself."

"You mean that mirage, Sir?" said the locker-room man, sympathetically.

"I mean that magnificent 'Viyella' sports shirt!" exclaimed Mr. Chipshott, excitedly.

"It's identical with the one I've been dreaming of—that delightful pattern, that trim cut, that perfectly-tailored collar! How did it get in here?"

"Wishful thinking, Sir," said the locker-room man. "Lots of the members have been seeing these mirages lately. 'Viyella' Visions, I call 'em."

"Then it is only a vision?"

"Yes, Sir—until the real thing appears."

"When I can play in a 'Viyella' shirt again," said Mr. Chipshott, "I shall be a far, far better golfer than I have ever been."

"That's what *all* the members say," said the locker-room man.

# Viyella

PYJAMAS • SPORTS SHIRTS • SOCKS

They'll all be back  
to brighten your wardrobe as  
soon as possible.



## FASTEST TO

## AMSTERDAM

And, for the first time since 1939, a regular all-British route! Two air services daily by new British-built Vikings bring Amsterdam within 1½ hours flying time of London. British European Airways are also fastest to Copenhagen (in 3 hours 20 minutes six times a week) and to Oslo via Stavanger (in 5 hours six times a week).

You can also fly on the regular services of B.E.A. between London and Ankara, Athens, Berlin, Bordeaux, Brussels, Frankfurt, Geneva, Gibraltar, Gothenburg, Hamburg, Helsinki, Istanbul, Lisbon, Madrid, Marseilles, Paris, Prague, Rome, Stockholm and Vienna.

## British European Airways



BEA THE KEY TO EUROPE

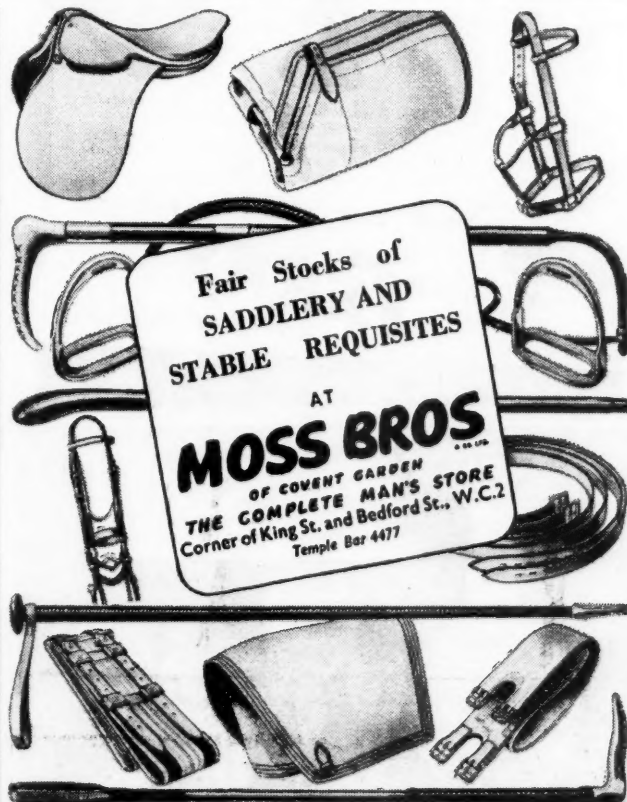
HEADQUARTERS NORTHOLT MIDDLESEX Reservations and enquiries through all principal travel agents and at Airways Terminal SW1 VICTORIA 2323

BALKAN SOBRANIE  
CIGARETTES & TOBACCO

# THIS ENGLAND...

THE CATHEDRAL—where traditions, without text or rules, guided artist-craftsmen in the creation of perfection. . . . It is with a modest sense of kinship with these traditions that we proudly send so many of our products to the Deaneries of England. Your Balkan Sobranie can put up a smoke-screen against every worry; in its smoking is peace, contentment, and long-lasting satisfaction.

SOBRANIE LTD LONDON, E.C.1



BOURNEMOUTH, MANCHESTER, PORTSMOUTH  
BRISTOL, CAMBERLEY, ALDERSHOT



This world-famed Sherry (formerly called Findlater's Fino) could not be registered under that name and thereby protected from imitators. For the safeguarding therefore of our world-wide clientele we have re-named it—Findlater's Dry Fly Sherry.

FINDLATER MACKIE TODD & CO. LTD.

Wine Merchants to H.M. the King, Windsor St. W. 1





By Appointment  
TOILET SOAP MAKERS  
TO H.M. THE KING

# Bronnley

Makers of  
FINE SOAPS  
for Fifty Years

It is no  
mere chance  
that Bronnley  
Soap is  
sought after so  
much.



B. BRONNLEY & CO. LTD.  
LONDON, W.5



**ANGOSTURA**  
aromatic bitters  
makes  
**Austerity**

**JELLIES, ICES AND  
PUDDINGS MUCH  
MORE EXCITING**

If your usual Wine Merchant is unable  
to supply you, you are invited to send  
his name and address to Angostura  
Bitters (London) Ltd., 61 Cheapside,  
London, E.C.2.

PRESENT RETAIL PRICES IN U.K.  
Half-bottle 17/6; miniature 5/-

**Robinson  
& Cleaver**  
famous for FINE LINENS  
London, Belfast & Liverpool



By appointment  
Bacon Curers to H.M. King George VI  
Previous appointment to the late King George V  
**C. & T. HARRIS (CALNE) LTD. CALNE, WILTS**

# HARRIS

*famous for Bacon since 1770*

Nestling in the Wiltshire Downs, their great food factories have made the  
name of HARRIS famous. HARRIS products have served the Empire well  
throughout the war. As soon as conditions permit retailers everywhere  
will receive increased supplies of Bacon, Pies, Cooked Meats and

**HARRIS WILTSHIRE SAUSAGES**



EVERYONE  
IN ENGLAND

*Dear Mr. Terry.  
Why can't  
I have an  
Anglepoise?*



Because, Dear Lady, the Anglepoise is so deservedly popular  
that production simply cannot keep pace with orders.

However, supplies are gradually increasing and we hope you'll  
secure your Anglepoise with its 1001 angles, its comfort and  
convenience and its saving on light bills...

Sole Makers—  
**HERBERT TERRY & SONS LTD., REDDITCH**

The **TERRY**  
Anglepoise LAMP

Patented all countries.

NOTE ITS  
1001 ANGLES



Flawless materials, delicately wrought,  
give it a shimmer and brilliance  
found in no other glassware. The  
name Stuart is etched on every piece.

**Stuart Crystal**



From  
*the Chilprufe Album*

This is MARY

With her fine record in class and at  
sport, Mary typifies the healthy mind in  
a healthy body.

As with most of her schoolfellows,  
Mary wears Chilprufe. Matron is very  
keen on it! It wears indefinitely, washes  
like new, and does give such grand, all-  
weather protection. After all, it is the  
finest Pure Wool Underwear in the world.

**Chilprufe**  
for CHILDREN

Also CHILPRUFE Dresses, Rompers, Cardigans,  
Buster Suits for toddlers, Shoes for Babies, Pram  
Toys and Man-Tailored Coats for Children.

**CHILPRUFE IS  
PURE WOOL  
MADE PERFECT**

Supplied only through  
Chilprufe Agents.  
**CHILPRUFE  
LIMITED  
LEICESTER**



**SAUCES  
MADE FOR  
THE  
CONNOISSEUR**

by  
**Escoffier**

SAUCE ROBERT SAUCE DIABLE

*For stiff beards*



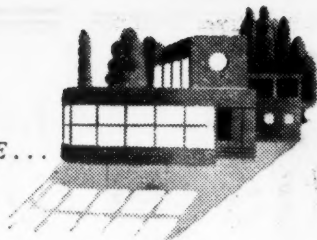
*and tender skins*

Price 3/- each  
incl. tax

Obtainable only from Retailers.  
**JAMES NEILL & CO. (SHEFFIELD) LTD.**



THE CHANCES ARE...



When the new homes are built  
much of the decorative and  
translucent glass will be

# Chance

GLASS

CHANCE BROTHERS LIMITED, Glass-makers since 1824,  
produce Rolled Plate, Wired Glass, Pressed Glassware, Laboratory Glassware,  
Architectural, Decorative and Lighting Glassware, Optical Glass, Scientific  
and other specialised Glass Products, Marine and Aviation Lighting Equip-  
ment. Head Office: Smethwick, Birmingham. London Office: 28 St. James's  
Square, S.W.1. Scottish Office & Works: Firhill, Glasgow, N.W.



ELATION MAKE-UP FILM. Not a liquid... not a cream...

but a most unusual foundation of the finest possible texture to be  
lightly filmed over the skin. An exquisite Dorothy Gray Preparation,  
peach-tinted to suit all skin-tones, to hold and flatter the make-up.

Dorothy Gray is a Registered Trade Mark

## Note these Facts

**25**  
WORKING DAYS LOST BY  
EACH MAN PER YEAR

**21**  
WORKING DAYS LOST BY  
EACH WOMAN PER YEAR

A recent medical test of an industrial group proved that rheumatism caused absenteeism among men sufferers at the rate of 25 working days per year, and among women sufferers at the rate of 21 working days per year. Rheumatic pain can be relieved safely and speedily by taking two tablets of 'Genasprin' in a little water—so can SLEEPLESSNESS, NEURITIS, TOOTHACHE, HEADACHE, COLDS AND FLU.

Supplies are limited, but your chemist will see you get your share. Prices 1/5d. and 2/3d.

At any time  
of strain or pain

**'Genasprin'**  
sees you through!

The word 'Genasprin' is the registered trade mark of Genatosan Ltd., Loughborough, Leics.

for his  
sake  
we must  
have a  
'fridge'



**Prestcold**  
WILL MAKE  
**Refrigeration**

AN EVERY-HOUSEHOLD WORD

PRESTCOLD

A PRODUCT OF THE PRESSED STEEL CO., LTD., COWLEY, OXFORD



CONTAINS

Glycerine

TO KEEP YOUR  
HANDS SOFT

1/- &amp; 2/-

GUMPTION PRODUCTS LTD., LONDON, W.1.

**BEAR  
BRAND  
HONEY**

The Premier Brand

Obtainable only on your  
Preserve Ration

THE BEAR HONEY CO. LTD.  
Branch of L. Garvin & Co. Ltd.  
ISLEWORTH, MIDDLESEX



# EMPIRE

Portable  
Typewriters

Made in England



British Typewriters Ltd.

Head Office & Works: West Bromwich

London Office & Showrooms:  
Premier House, 150 Southampton Row,  
W.C.1

To **"RAZOR"** smile



**"THE 'HAIR' HASN'T  
A DOG'S CHANCE"**

... Your stubble is in for trouble, round the bend and on the straight. Close running assured with ...

**Double Six  
BLADES**  
MANUFACTURED BY  
**SOUPLEX LTD., MORECAMBE**

# "WHAT'S THAT?"



— you'll feed me on  
**CHAPPIE**  
whenever you can?

You know how much your dog's fitness, and consequently his spirits, depend on his diet. So give him Chappie whenever you can. It's his meat diet balanced to the best advantage.



1/- a tin

# "CHAPPIE" DOG FOOD



THE AUSTIN MOTOR CO., LTD • LONGBRIDGE • BIRMINGHAM

# KERFOOT'S MEDICINAL LOZENGES

based on the skill  
and experience of  
three generations



THOMAS KERFOOT & Co., Ltd.  
Vale of Bardsey • Lancashire

KG27

Something to  
sing about!



You can now obtain **SPRATT'S**  
BIRD SEEDS in good supply.

# SPRATT'S

MIXED BIRD SEED

Contains Canary Seed

Obtainable in packets, 10d.

SPRATT'S Cod Liver Oil Bird Food

in 7-lb. bags, 8/6

SPRATT'S Budgerigar Mixture

in packets, 10d.

SPRATT'S PATENT LTD., LONDON, E.3



Let  
**Andy**  
GLOVES

do the dirty work

Of Ironmongers & Stores, or direct. One coupon  
per pair.  
**TEDSON, THORNLEY & CO., ROCHDALE**

# 'ADJUSTEEL' SHELVING

for  
WORKS AND  
STORAGE  
EQUIPMENT



Send for Catalogue - P/820

# CONSTRUCTORS

TYBURN RD • ERDINGTON  
BIRMINGHAM 24

## For the man of to-day



A bad posture in your office chair wrecks your stomach muscles — they get slack, soft, and protect you no more. Linia Belts support you and tone-up the muscles — you look fitter, you feel fitter and you tire less easily.

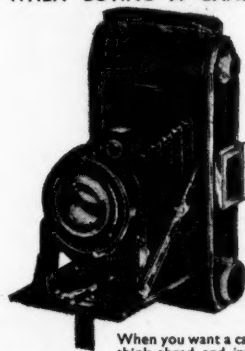
Price including the Linia Jock Strap  
From £4.4.0 and 3 coupons

## LINIA BELT

SOLD ONLY BY  
**J. ROUSSEL LTD.**  
REGENT STREET, LONDON, W.1  
Phone: REG. 7570

And at  
Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, etc.

## THINK AHEAD WHEN BUYING A CAMERA



When you want a camera think ahead and invest a little extra in a good one—the Ensign SELFIX is a good camera. Lens: Ensign Anastigmat F/4.5. Shutter: Ensign Epsilon, 8 speeds or 4 speeds. Takes 8 pictures  $2\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$  or  $12\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$  on size E.20 Film. PRICE: 8 speed £17/5s. 6d., 4 Speed £16 2s. 6d. (inc. Purchase Tax).

**Ensign  
SELFIX**

BARNET ENSIGN LTD., LONDON, E.17

**H.R. Harmer**  
INTERNATIONAL  
STAMP AUCTIONEERS  
THE BEST MEDIUM FOR THE SALE  
OF FINE AND RARE STAMPS  
39-42 NEW BOND ST LONDON, W.1  
AND AT NEW YORK ★ TEL. MAYFAIR 0218



All fun and no tears . . . but only so long as the branch the children choose is sufficiently flexible to meet all the strains and stresses placed upon it. YOU can meet all the strains and stresses of life by "Flexibility" in Insurance matters. The M.E.M.A. offer an Insurance Service that through Flexibility and Independence provides for all individual requirements.

**ALL CLASSES OF INSURANCE TRANSACTED**  
(except Marine)

Competitive Rates, Maximum Cover, Generous Bonus Schemes, Country-wide Service.

## MIDLAND EMPLOYERS'

MUTUAL ASSURANCE LIMITED

Head Office: 16 Waterloo St., Birmingham, 2

20 Branches all over the country.  
Premium exceeds £3,100,725. General Manager: Allan S. Barnfield, O.B.E.



## Great Scotch!

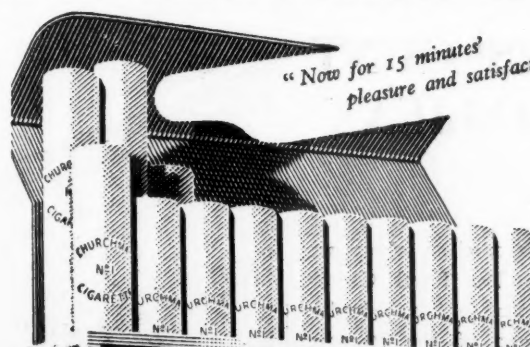


## OLD ANGUS

A NOBLE SCOTCH  
Gentle as a Lamb

OA9d

## TIME FOR A CHURCHMAN'S No. 1



"Now for 15 minutes' pleasure and satisfaction."



Issued by The Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Great Britain & Ireland), Ltd.

C.363c

## SOON?



The question of Foreign Exchange still prevents the importation of Harvey's famous wines. Shipping space is also a consideration. We, like our many patient friends, keep hoping—with an eye on the butts of sherry and pipes of port, which are ready and waiting—in Spain and Portugal!

## HARVEY'S

JOHN HARVEY & SONS LTD

**Bristol**  
FOUNDED 1796

Wine Merchants to His Majesty The King

CVS-21



'How happy could I  
be with either'



*There's nothing like a Guinness,  
except another Guinness*

G.E.1293.B

THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY LIMITED



BY APPOINTMENT TO H.M. THE KING  
SUPPLIERS OF GRAMOPHONES,  
RECORDS AND RADIO APPARATUS



## "HIS MASTER'S VOICE"

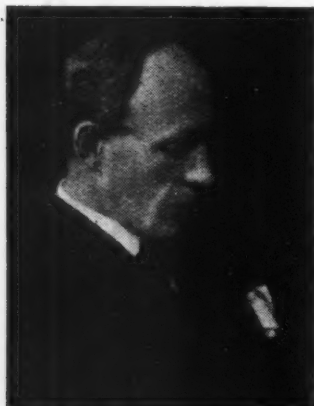
*The symbol of all that is best in sound  
and vision reproduction*

RADIOS · RADIOGRAMS  
TELEVISION

*Consult your H.M.V. Dealer for  
latest information about new models*

THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY LTD., HAYES, MIDDXX.

FAMOUS MEN PLEAD HUMANITY'S CAUSE



## VISCOUNT HALIFAX

*writes:*

"No good cause has stronger claim to support than The Royal Cancer Hospital, for it is the leader in one of the sternest fights that medical science and research are making

on behalf of humanity; and the enemy that it fights—cancer—is cruel and merciless in its attacks.

"I commend most warmly the appeal that the Hospital is making."

*Please send a Gift to the Treasurer*

**The Royal  
Cancer Hospital**  
(FREE)

FULHAM ROAD, LONDON, S.W.3

*Still  
better—  
GREYS*

Just honest to goodness tobacco

ISSUED BY GODFREY PHILLIPS LIMITED



# PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHIRIVARI



Vol. CCXI No. 5521

October 23 1946

## Charivaria

A DUTCH visitor says the English remain incurably phlegmatic in times of crisis. He should look us up again when the Test Match scores begin to come through.

We read of experiments to produce a miniature breed of cat. It is designed to swing in any prefab.

New houses are not being built with basements, says a Government official. This will be a disappointment to people who thought that was the reason why so many hadn't appeared above ground yet.



### Busman's Holiday

"VAC. for 2, suit bus. couple."  
Advt. in "Evening News."

We are told that long outstanding thumbs denote an artistic temperament and a philosophic outlook. Hitchhikers agree that this is right enough as far as the philosophic outlook goes.

"The second-hand departments at big London stores are not so busy as they were," says a trade report. Many customers, we understand, have sold right out.

"I asked for a buttonhook in a shop and the attendant didn't know what I meant," says a lady correspondent. Couldn't she have put her inquiry in the form of a question-mark?

### Incomplete Anglers

"Into these troubled waters, the correspondent adds, many queer fishermen may be throwing their rods."—*Iraq paper.*

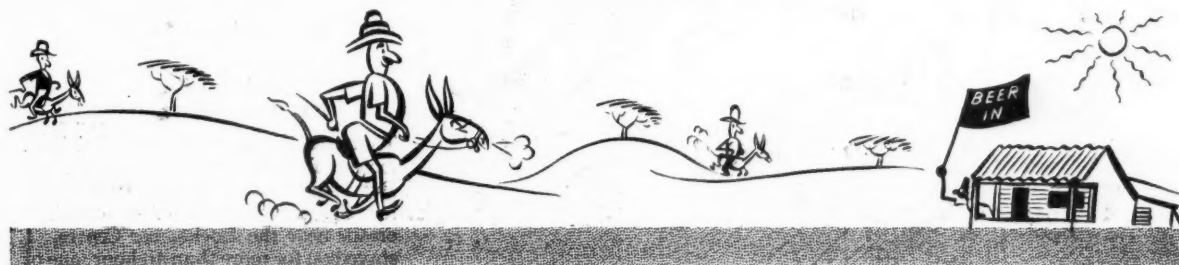
There is no paper shortage in America. Composers of popular songs now jot down new numbers on the backs of new envelopes.

Milk drunk before whisky, we read, prevents the latter from having any effect. Red noses will, it is thought, now qualify their owners for the milk priority list.

"A circular convening the meeting, issued by the president, referred to 'rampant socialistic nationalism swinging the pendulum from one form of dictatorship to another, with its millstone of hamstringing red tape, bureaucratic control, and myriads of Government drones steadily nibbling away our few remaining individual rights.'"—*Western Morning News.*

A photograph might help.

We read of an African native who keeps a stores especially for the use of three British residents. So the customer is always white.



## An Innocent at Large

[Mr. Punch's special representative is spending the next few months in America to find out what is really happening over there.]

### III—New York, Spoken and Written

LEFT London just as Fleet Street was letting out its belt a little. I saw the larger newspapers and liked them—though I have a theory that outsize headlines are bad for the eyes—and with Lord Camrose and Sir Walter Layton I rejoiced at the brighter though still distant prospect of unlimited newsprint. Now, I am not so sure.

It seems to me, after only a week among them, that New Yorkers allow themselves only one real handicap in their drive for efficiency and co-prosperity—the daily burden of paper. I have no scales handy so I cannot tell you what these monster dailies weigh, but I have conducted a number of experiments with them and the results are impressive. For example, if a paper like the *New York Herald-Tribune* is allowed to accumulate for more than a week in an hotel bedroom the atmosphere becomes suffocating and free air-space falls below the safety regulations. If the *New York Times* is carried under the arm for more than two blocks the apparent superfluity of bars and drug-stores becomes perfectly understandable. If a copy of the *World-Telegram* were dropped from the observation platform (seventieth floor) of the R.C.A. building to

strike a pedestrian even a glancing blow I wouldn't answer for the consequences.

Last Sunday's *Herald-Tribune* ran to nine sections. The first contained fifty-eight pages; the others varied between twelve and thirty-six and there were comics and a weekly magazine thrown in. I don't know how many fires you could light with the complete portfolio. But in one paper I examined forty-six of the fifty-eight pages were advertisements—so arranged that a minimum quantity of reading matter appeared on each page.

New Yorkers have worked out smart answers to the advertisements problem. If it takes the form of sky-writing they ignore it. The weak-minded are rapidly and permanently removed by the charging hordes of taxis and private cars. To eliminate radio ads. needs more skill. On Wednesday I listened to the favourite programme of American broadcasting, "Information Please," with Mr. Fred Allen as guest star. It was very good. My host showed an uncanny sense of timing and by careful and deft manipulation of the switches cut out every commercial plug whether by proclamation or innuendo. I told him that although the B.B.C. does not make use of sponsored items many people in Britain would envy him his skill. All the same the constant twiddling was rather upsetting.

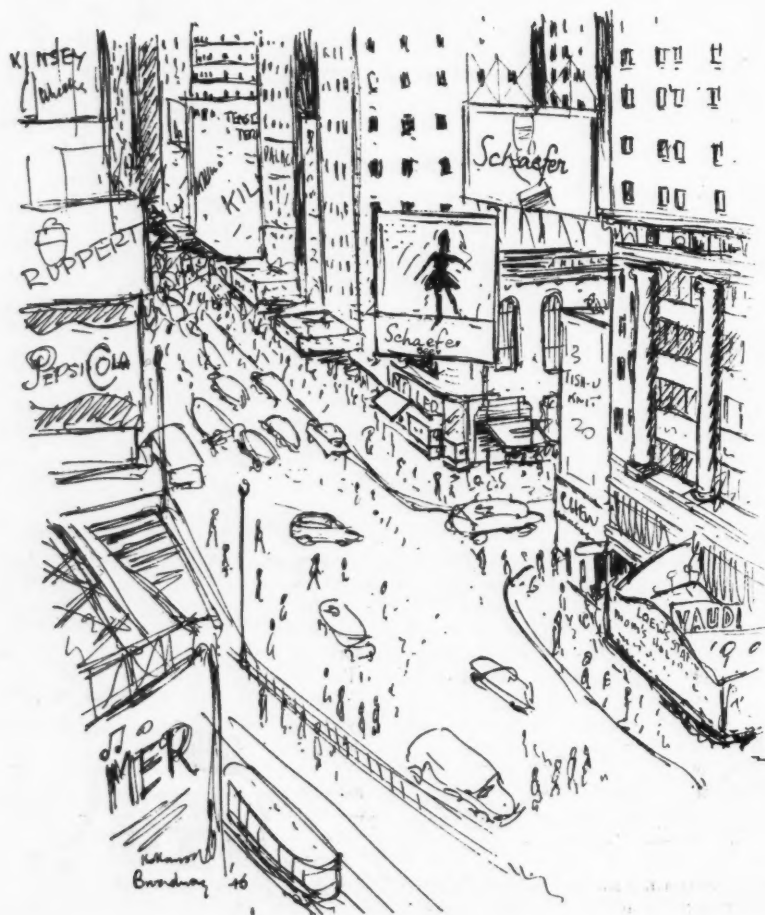
Of course, the sectional arrangement of the newspapers helps to spread the burden of newsprint very fairly throughout the family. Pa gets the weightiest section with the main news and political gossip, while Junior's comic is only just heavy enough to tax his strength. The sections for aesthetes, on books, ballet, etc., are appropriately middle-weight.

Some forms of advertising cannot be escaped. But nobody in his senses can object to the Great White Way which makes a memory of Piccadilly—even pre-war Piccadilly—shine like a debilitated glowworm in a coal-mine. In Times Square a firm of brewers gives a continuous variety programme on a huge screen of electric lights. The five-act entertainment ranges from cartoon to photographic strip-tease and is much better than the fare at some of the theatres I have visited. But you can't always get a comfortable stand on the sidewalk.

The other day I saw this sign outside a mortician's—

ELEGANT FUNERALS  
Reduced Prices  
FOR ONE MONTH ONLY

That was the kind of hustle I'd been looking for, and I was truly impressed. But I must reserve my greatest praise for the performance of a soap-box orator near the Rockefeller Centre. I stayed on for more than an hour, one of





a large audience, but I couldn't make out what he was selling. His patter went right to the follicles of twentieth-century civilization. He told us why America must be strong, why pinching causes cancer, why intelligence tests are phoney, why the Brooklyn Dodgers were unlucky and everything else that should go into the next supplement of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. As I left, as inconspicuously as



Sunday morning, New York

possible, he hurled after me some sound advice about varicose veins. We could do with hucksters like him in Britain.

And now to return to the newspapers, their contents, and a preview of the British press in 1950. I think we may expect brighter and more detailed reports from the astrologers. Personally, I have long been dissatisfied with "Wednesday should be a successful day: make friends," and "Don't be too ambitious on Friday." This, from the *New York Mirror*, is much more in my line—precise, meaty and yet simple:

"General Tendencies—Easy to find flaws in any written or printed work at this time so be careful about all detail matters in office or correspondence. . . . Any form of hospitality this evening would probably be enjoyable and not too difficult . . . It looks as if this were the year for matrimony for the single people born upon this date—the others will have to subdue any sentimental twinges here. . . . Look for developments at any time after the end of January, even earlier if you are extra impatient. . . ."

It's the little extra impatience that does it, girls.

Now imagine yourself seated before an immense breakfast overflowing with calories and vitamins (in my hotel, anyway) with an imitation London siren wailing on a police-car below while you read the leading article in your paper, which is propped up precariously by all the tableware you can muster. The subject is "Meat and Politics" and you are told:

"The Republicans (says a report) have been trying to

scare the people for years into voting for them. Now they are trying to starve them into voting for them.

"Nuts!"

Try that over again quietly and you'll begin to sense the dynamism of American journalism—or, rather, of one section of it. For a long time I thought "Nuts!" had something to do with an article on another page about meat substitutes. I was wrong. There's more than I thought in the "digest" idea. But let me add, as speedily as possible, that most New York papers lean and sometimes fall over backwards to observe the proprieties and preserve the King's English. And a week's solid reading has convinced me that British affairs are covered much more thoroughly and soundly in the American press than American affairs in the London papers.

More astonishing to the Englishman than anything else over here is the volume of talk and print devoted to speculation about World War III. There is a touch of hysteria, surely, in all this, exaggerated no doubt by L'affaire Wallace, but it is very alarming. People will give you dates for the opening shots and most of the estimates are within two years. You can read things like this:

"U.S. FORCES NOW CUT TO LESS THAN HALF OF RUSSIA'S."

"SIX MONTHS MAY TELL TALE."

and—

"Sure, let's get rid of all our defensive weapons, as Henry Wallace says. The Atom Bomb, for instance. Let's get it out of sight by throwing it behind the iron curtain."

But I suppose you can find irresponsible factions in every community.



"... by the way, do you suffer from . . .?"

Finally, after recording a welcome of incredible warmth, just one word of pique. Almost everywhere I go I am dubbed a European. I get the impression that most New Yorkers deal only in continents, that Britain is too small for separate mention. Oh, yes, I know that Federal Union is a worthy ideal and that we should all think in terms of syllogistic geography, but it hurts a bit. Perhaps we in Britain shouldn't talk about America so much when we mean the U.S.A.

HOD.

### Eight o'Clock News

I DREAMT that I heard the tired radio say, "I'm bored with the eight o'clock news for to-day, so I hope I shan't cause any listener sorrow if I take it as read."

I will give you instead the eight o'clock news for to-morrow."

## Some More Short Words

A MAN who reads this page—he may be the one man who reads it for all that I know or care—writes to ask me how long I could go on with this kind of speech, and not break down and go mad, or drive him mad, which he thinks (for some strange cause) would be worse.

What queer things men ask to be sure! It would seem as though the life's aim of a man like this was to carp at the work of one who has set a great goal in front of him and strives to reach it, when it could be of far more use to such a man and to the rest of the world if he were to mind his own job or go out on to the lawn and hop round like a thrush and eat worms.

Of course it is hard to write like this. But when did a hard task daunt a great soul? And let me tell him here and now (and tush to the poor fool), that so great is my strength of will and so strong the flow of my speech that I could write like this till the skies fall or the last trump sounds, or if not so long as that at least till the cows come home. Let me tell him that there is no thought nor theme which fills the mind of the world in these sad hours of which I could not write in this style, though some of my words might seem strange to ears which are stuffed with the cant and rant of the day.

If, to take a case, I wished to write of those who rule us and make our laws, I should speak of the Great Moot on the bank of the Thames, of the High Moot, and Low Moot, and the small moots which spring from them, and deal with war and work, and coal and food, and one of which in course of time may build homes in which we may live.

We still speak of a meet (do we not?) where men in red coats come and use blue words: but we have ceased to speak of a moot where men in black coats come to speak words which are red. But there are now far more moots than meets; though to make up for it, times have changed so much in this land of ours that there are far more seats than suits. Not to say far more beets than boots.

Or I might wish to speak of the New Bomb. The New Bomb bursts with so great a force that the wise men think it should not be made, and that all men should have the right to search all lands to see that it shall not be made.

This is a cause of great strife between the men of the Far East, and the men of the Far West. For the men of the Far West say "We will scrap the New Bomb if you like and you may search us if we search you." But the men of the Far East say "Search us? Not on your life, old man." Thus it seems that the world may be blown to bits some day, since there is no trust or sure faith in it, and these wise words set down with so much care will have been set down in vain, though I should have liked to have them carved on my tomb.

But since those who read are tired, I take it, of the New Bomb, and tired of the want of work, and homes, and shoes, and cream, and tired of jokes about beer, let me turn to a thing which has not ceased to plague our minds since the days when Eve spoke to the Great Snake. Let us turn to "oomph." What short word that meant so much has there been in this tongue of ours since the dawn of Time? Our men of law have been asked of late to say what "oomph" is and why; and if one girl or firm has the sole claim to it, or whether it is owned by all time and all the earth, and they have played their part right well and earned the fee that was marked on their brief, so that I need but add a few words to theirs.

I think that the wife of that old Greek King, that girl born of a swan's egg, who was the child of Zeus and who was seized by the Prince of Troy, and was watched by the old men as she walked on the walls of the town had much "oomph," though it took some time to say so in song, and it may be that now and then the words which have been used to speak of her looks have touched men's hearts with a thrill as keen as the word "oomph" gives to those who see the new films. I think that the girl whose hair was long, her foot was light, and her eyes were wild, and she looked at the knight as she did love and made sweet moan, so that she had the poor mutt in thrall, I think that this dame must have had quite a lot of oomph, and that the man who wrote "If she be not so to me what care I how fair she be," was in his own crude way on the track of this word and if he had thought of it would have used it at once and spared us the pain of his rhyme. And if a man said that he stood at night near a large hall with the words on his lips:

*"The red rose cries 'She is near, she is near,  
And the white rose weeps 'She is late,'"*

he failed to sum up in five words what he wished to say, and what he would have said had he been born in these days; I mean, the plain fact that this wench Maud had "oomph."

The fact that a word so full of force and truth has come to the test of our dour men of law, shows, I think, that though much alters for the worse in this world of ours, the love of man and maid does not change, or, if it does change, adds strength to strength and charm to charm as the stars wax and wane and new scenes are shot and shown; and more and more words are cut down to make the rolls of stuff on which we print trash for fools to read. Or if not, not.

But stay. I will quote you a thing which is far from trash out of the news of the day. It deals with a theft of gems.

*"It is thought the thief walked through the main gate up the drive and through the main door."*

The man who wrote these words wrote them not by plan, but by chance. Yet how plain they are, how full of pith and force! How clear the sly deed stands forth to the eye of the mind!

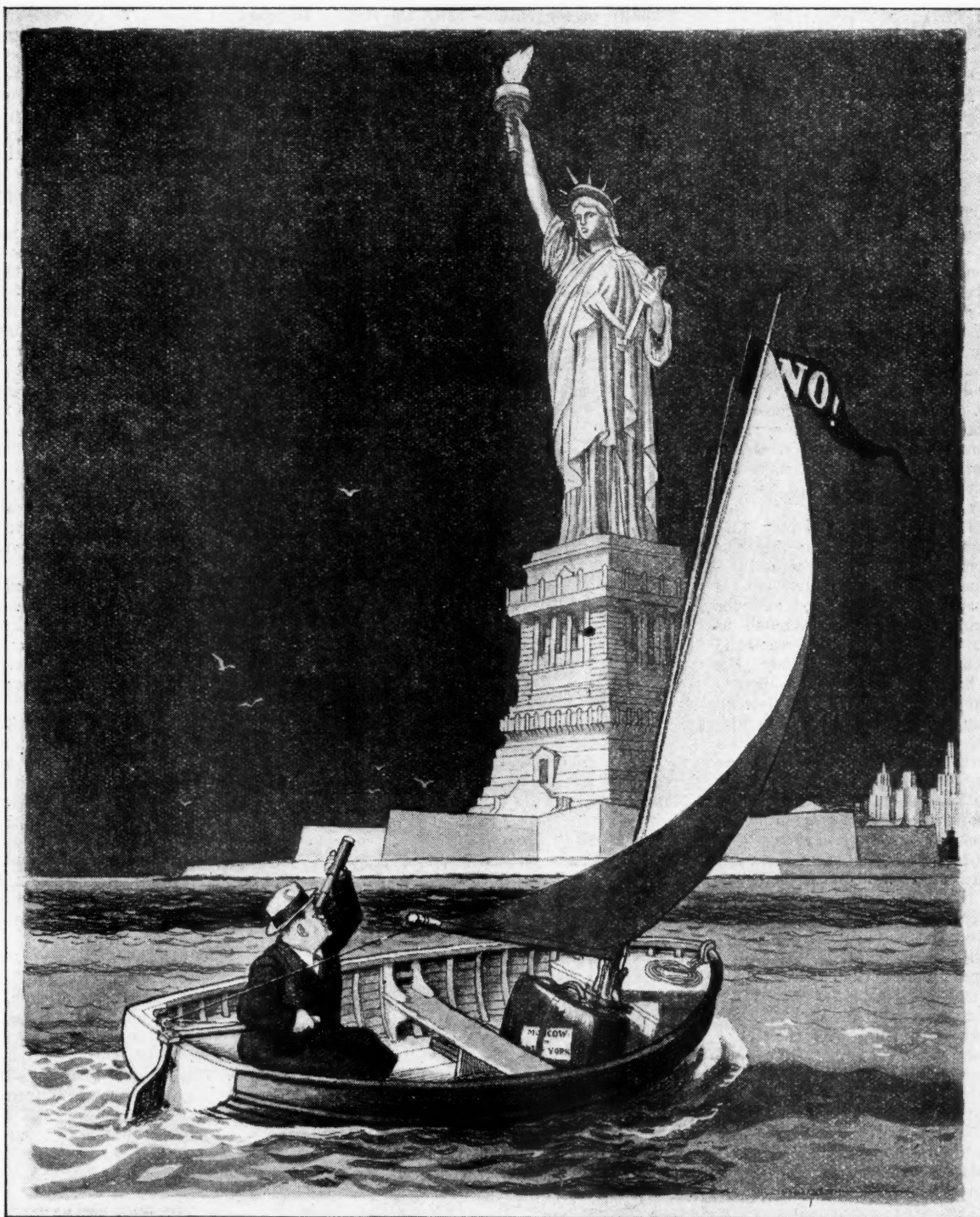
EVOE.

## Place des Ormes

**S**UR la Place des Ormes, assise sur un banc  
Des pensionnaires passaient habillées de blanc—  
Le vent de la mer transformait leur voiles  
En nuages agités parsemés d'étoiles.

Sur la Place des Ormes j'étais sans lendemain.  
Un mendiant fredonnait, un béret dans la main—  
Sous les remparts il y avait une si grande paix  
J'aurai lancé toute ma fortune dans cet ancien béret.

Sur la Place des Ormes je trainerai un jour  
Un lendemain déchu, tordu de détours—  
Assise sur ce banc sous ces remparts énormes  
Je retrouverai cette paix sur la Place des Ormes.



**WESTWARD HO!**

"How unspeakably bourgeois!"



## At the Pictures

## AUSTRALIAN BEEF

NOBODY, in reviewing the British-Australian semi-documentary *The Overlanders* (Director: HARRY WATT), seems to have recalled the Hollywood treatment of the same basic situation in 1938, in *The Texans*. This is worth recalling, I think, for the sake of the contrast. There too the central theme was the driving overland of a great herd of cattle—many more, indeed, than in *The Overlanders*—and there too we saw them in many spectacular scenes; but the impression of reality was infinitely slighter. It is perhaps unfair to generalize about a film seen so long ago, but the fact remains that I've almost forgotten it, whereas parts of the new one seem likely to stick in my mind permanently.

I admit that period may have something to do with it. The period of *The Overlanders* is 1942, when a Japanese invasion of Australia was expected and the point was to get as much as possible out of the Japs' reach and destroy what had to be left. For a fleeting instant at the opening I remembered another Hollywood film, *The North Star*: in that also we were shown what "scorched earth" meant in terms of everyday things and human feelings—but the momentary glimpse of the Australians destroying their treasures is much more moving than was the longer, built-up scene of the Hollywood Russians doing the same thing. First orders had been to kill the cattle ("I've got some ammunition here somewhere," says the boss glumly, poking about his desk); this film tells the story of one man who, with five or six helpers, determined instead to try "overlanding" nearly a thousand head, for sixteen hundred miles, over forbidding country, in the worst season, against all advice. He succeeded, and his example was followed.

This is an excellent bit of film-making: good to look at, worth thinking about, full of character. It seems to me to miss fire

only when it is tempted into the paths of convention—as in the slight love-story (which still finds room for the good old interrupted embrace) and the rather hardworking "comic relief."



J.H.DOWD  
[The Overlanders]

## STAMPEDE STOPPERS

Corky . . . . . JOHN FERNSE  
Dan . . . . . CHIPS RAFFERTY



[The Magic Bow]

## INVASION STOPPER

Paul . . . . . DENNIS PRICE  
Paganini . . . . . STEWART GRANGER

The remarkable absence of coughs from the audience when I saw *The Magic Bow* (Director: BERNARD KNOWLES) I explain by the fact that it is impossible to cough and yawn at the same time. I believe it is literally true that no other picture ever made me yawn as much as this. The most interesting thing about it, the thing that impressed me most, is a point of mere mechanics: the way in which STEWART GRANGER as *Paganini* manages to appear (to a casual and inexperienced eye) to be playing what is actually being played off-screen by YEHUDI MENUHIN. This important matter must have called for enormous pains and intensive rehearsal, and the story (which takes *Paganini* through most of the musical-biography clichés, and some others) was never strong enough to distract my attention from it.

And what is being played? Well, the list of the music begins strongly with Phil Green, continues with Tartini, Brazzini and Paganini himself (four compositions), and has poor old Beethoven bringing up the rear.

The fact that the well-built, well-nourished and essentially film-heroic Mr. GRANGER was an odd choice for the part of the cadaverous, electric, and sinister

*Paganini* has been pretty well rubbed in by everybody who has written about this film. Of course the circumstances of the manufactured story, not the facts of Paganini's life, had to be allowed for: Mr. GRANGER suits them better than anyone more physically like the original. But if they were going to throw all facts overboard they might just as well have let Mr. MENUHIN play *Paganini* as well as playing for him. R. M.

## A Little Judicious Levitation

"It is a quiet, sunny morning. I place my heavy Irish feet on one deck chair, and lower my heavy Irish self into the curved and welcoming seat of another."

"Sunday Dispatch."



"Not quite what you WANT! Good heavens, man, what's THAT got to do with it?"



"So now you know what your Aunt May did in the A.T.S. On the command 'Dismiss,' turn smartly to the right, count three and break away in an orderly fashion."

## The Great Steinbock Mystery

THE recent arrival at Avonmouth of two steinbocks in a consignment of animals from Mombasa has caused quite a flutter in the belles-lettres belt, I am now able to reveal.

The general opinion is that this is a clumsy attempt to smuggle American authors into this country under the very noses of the immigration authorities. A well-known publisher to whom I spoke yesterday said: "This is a clumsy attempt to smuggle American authors into this country under the very noses of the immigration authorities. Two steinbocks, eh? A likely story. That lower-case 's' and the changing of the second 'e' into an 'o' will fool nobody. This country does not need bootleg brains. I would back my new discovery, Deirdre Delacroix (*How Brown Were My Breadcrumbs*, 45th thousand), against the best America can send. Coming ashore with a lot of wild animals won't get them anywhere, except perhaps to Chessington." He turned away, and I saw that his eyes, for a publisher, were suspiciously bright.

Personally I do not think we need be unduly alarmed by this report. Let us face the fact that the smuggling of American writers into this country has been going on sporadically for some years. I may be permitted to speak with some authority on the subject, for I myself was at one time in my career actively engaged in this unholy trade. I see now that the dangers were great, the rewards small. But I was young and headstrong, and the idea of running novelists, many of them women, into this country appealed to some boyish streak of romanticism in my nature.

How it all comes back to me now! I was master of the ketch *Charlotte Brontë* at the time, plying between Galveston, Texas, and London River, ostensibly with a cargo of nitrates. Little did the oafish excise men who examined my craft suspect that beneath a top-dressing of potassium lurked a cargo of human souls destined for the hell-holes of Paternoster Row!

Arriving at my rendezvous, I would drop anchor and flash a light from the

wheel-house. Almost immediately my signal would be answered from the shore. After a while I would hear the muffled splash of oars and a dinghy would slip silently alongside. In a trice a party of publishers would swarm on board, their gold teeth glinting in the moonlight and their belts bulging with the most villainous-looking contracts I had ever set eyes on.

Pausing only to throw me some coarse greeting, they would shamble aft to where my human freight lay huddled in the stern-sheets. Wretched creatures! I tried to give them clean stern-sheets as often as possible during the voyage, but the ship's laundry was sadly under-staffed, and it was an unprepossessing crew that gazed up shyly into the baleful eyes of their new masters.

Their choice made, the publishers would accompany me to my cabin. There, over a glass of Jamaica, the deeds would be signed and a bag of money would change hands. Myrtle St. Clair Esterhazy, the girl who was to give you *To-morrow is the Day Before Yesterday*, had gone to the highest bidder.

Alas, the game was soon to lose its element of danger. By the following year lady novelists were coming ashore quite openly on the arms of their agents, a scrap of old lace—and at least one other lady novelist—at their wrinkled throats. At the dock gates they would be met by the gaily-coloured horse-buses of the publishing houses, and many a lively scene would follow as the drivers solicited the newcomers' patronage with hoarse promises of serial rights or coaxed some wayward beauty into their vehicles with the butt end of their whips, the nostrils of their horses flaring at the scent of so much genius on the morning air.

Heigh-ho! Sometimes, as these rheumy old eyes of mine twitch under the impact of the latest gin-and-gun-play epic, I wish I were back at my old calling, the deck lifting under my feet and One-Eyed Jake Fothergill, father of the American Gangster novel, battered below hatches.

Sometimes I feel I should never have unbattered him.

"The B.B.C. have done well to introduce their Third Programme. Though the title is uninspiring, the idea is a good one. Whether or not it receives the welcome it deserves will depend upon how it is put over.

"It will of course be labelled 'highbrow.' But there is really no dividing line on foreheads."—"Daily Mail."

No? You ought to see *ours* sometimes.



## Cups of Tea

"HALF a cup, please," said Harold.

He gave me a meaning look as Joan manipulated the tea-pot. She handed back the cup, and he took it with the easy triumph of a conjurer producing a rabbit from his hat.

"You see, George?" he said, putting the cup down in the centre of the table and looking at it with disfavour. "I asked for half a cup and I have got a whole cup. It always happens. There must be some strange kink in women which makes them do this. Is it that they never hear what we say, or is it that the sound of pouring tea bewitches their ears and paralyses their fingers? Whatever is its cause the situation fills me with foreboding. I can see little hope for a world split into two such irreconcilable factions—on the one hand men, thwarted, passionate beings, for ever on their knees, begging for half a cup of tea; on the other hand women, cold, dreamy creatures, perpetually handing them full cups with uncomprehending smiles."

"Well, don't let it get cold," said Joan.

Harold drank moodily.

He reverted to the subject later in the evening while we sat in the Red Lion, filling in time before the church

social which Joan had bidden us attend at eight o'clock.

"Sometimes," he said wistfully, "I used to dream of meeting a girl who was completely mistress of herself when pouring out tea. But that was a long time ago; I didn't realize the difficulties then. The roots of this problem are as deep as time itself. Woman has always been behind the tea-pot, or its equivalent. It is there that she finds her fullest self-expression, and to meddle with her there is to invite disaster. I once knew a girl in Chichester who was driven by her brother's scorn to discipline herself in this matter. After a time she could manage three quarters of a cup; but the strain imposed on her was dreadful, and she developed a repression of unusual dimensions."

We drank deeply and pondered the memory of this semi-paragon.

Shortly after eight we arrived at the social. Joan recognized our arrival with an approving nod from the far corner of the hall, where she was lavishing sandwiches on the butcher and baker (we have more candlesticks than we need).

We sat down in little green chairs and looked round us in what we considered to be a jolly manner. We

longed for something with which we could toy, to conceal the awful fact that we never knew what we were supposed to do at functions of this kind.

It was then that the girl in blue came over to us. She was a remarkably pretty girl. "Can I bring you two some tea?" she asked in a low musical voice.

"Yes, please. Only half a cup for me," replied Harold, looking up solemnly into her brown eyes.

While she was away I glanced interrogatively at him. He shook his head, but this did not deceive me. Hope was gleaming in his eyes: and when she came back the hand which he stretched out for his cup was not quite steady. With the fascinated expression of a man who peers into a crystal and sees his destiny, he looked over the rim of the cup. It was precisely half full.

In a series of magnificent gestures he placed the cup aside, stood up, and took the girl's hand in his. He opened his mouth, and I grew pale, knowing the type of long emotional speech which a far less occasion than this could elicit from him.

But the girl anticipated him. "I'm terribly sorry," she said, "but it's all there was in the pot."



"They want to make it a closed shop."



"See what I mean, Thompson? The customer is always right."

### Bathwater Medley

**D**O you ever lie in your bath  
Imagining,  
What you'd do if you were King?  
Dreaming of sceptres and crowns,  
Of jesters and clowns,  
Of Circles and Rounds,  
Of musical sounds,  
Of anything?

Do you ever lie in your bath  
And feel glad  
There's pleasure to be had  
From the tingle of bathwater round your feet,  
From growing redder than underdone meat,  
From losing the soap beneath your seat,  
When you are feeling sad?

A sudden thought,  
As good thoughts ought,  
Has just occurred to me.  
Do you think  
(With a chummy wink)  
A bath might be had in clink?

Do you ever lie in your bath,  
And ponder,  
Letting your mind wander  
O'er factories and towns,  
Villages and downs;  
Imagining dresses and gowns,  
Kisses and frowns  
Out yonder?

OR do you wash in a sink?

### Unfair to Test Fans

**I**T is a little difficult for me to get my mind absolutely clear about our prospects in Australia.

I can see that W. R. Hammond is in form. I have maintained all along that he is a good bat and he is now fulfilling the promise of which I spoke in 1934 and again in 1935, '36, '37, '38 and the early part of 1939. I said nothing about him, it is true, in 1945, owing to the widespread shortage of paper, but that is not to say that I ever lost confidence in his ability to push the length ball through the covers or to deal faithfully with anything at all loose on the leg side. He should do well in Australia.

I am also fairly happy about L. Hutton and D. Compton. Len and Denis are good boys, if I may say so, getting that left leg well across and meeting the ball with the middle of the bat every time. It will take a well-flighted delivery to dislodge either of them when properly set. The trouble is I am unable to make up my mind just how well the Australians are fighting their deliveries at present. I will go further and admit that I do not even know the names of the men whose deliveries I ought to be watching. It is a shocking, an appalling thing, that with hardly more than four weeks to go before the first Test Match, the names of Australia's most promising trundlers escape me.

Not altogether. There was Toshack. I got the name from a piece in the paper by E. W. Swanton, or Bruce Harris, or it may have been E. M. Wellings, and I made up my mind to keep my eye on Toshack. If I take in a great many papers, I thought, and read them with attention I shall very soon know Toshack's initials, and perhaps his State and whether he bowls with his left or right hand, whether fast, fast-medium, medium-fast, medium, slow, double-bouncers or sneaks. But the *Queen Elizabeth* got in the way. When I ought to have been scratching about for snippets at the bottom of the Sports page I was wasting my time with the last words from Southampton Docks.

"Among the large number of well-known people who are passengers are . . . Sir Hugo and Lady Cunliffe Owen, Sir Andrew and Lady Duncan, Sir Ernest Fisk, Sir Alan Herbert, M.P., Viscount Lambert, Lord Leathers, Sir Simon Marks, Adml. Sir Gordon Ramsey, Sir William and Lady Rootes, Sir Reginald and Lady Rootes, Viscount and Viscountess Rothermere . . ."

Not a bowler among the lot. There was a Root who bowled leg-theory for Worcestershire in the old days, with his colleague Tarbox plugging away at the other end; but Sir William Rootes? No. Not a name one has ever spotted in the averages.

"The skipper of a launch with 'Bye-Bye Toots' painted on its roof signalled us bon voyage in semaphore with his hands."

How can I be expected to comment with any authority on the strength of Australia's attack when my mind is continually assaulted with this sort of stuff?

Meuleman, now. There is a name to conjure with. But he bats, and I am strong enough in batting already. Sidney Barnes and W. A. Brown (who has hurt his hand) and Bradman and Miller and Hassett and this chap from Tasmania, Tol—dash it—Tug-something; it's on the tip of my tongue. I could make out a batting-order for them, I dare say, if I put my mind to it.

Tallon! That's the man. My belief is that Tallon may prove a serious stumbling-block to our bowlers at No. 5 or 6. But does he trundle? I think not. I cannot find a word about it in any of my eleven morning papers. All I can find is a lot of unsporting rubbish about "Oomph."



"Mrs. Banks has been, dear. She came halfway through the News and she didn't go until the start of Somebody and his Sextet."

"A girl may have beauty of both mind and body and still be markedly lacking in 'Oomph.' Music may be said to have 'Oomph' in that it is animated in a spine-tingling way (to some, music with 'Oomph' merely causes the hair to stand on end, rather than to tingle the spine, but that is rather beside the point).

Mr. Justice Evershed. I agree."

I agree too. I cannot see, at the risk of being held guilty of contempt of court, what all this has to do with our prospects in Australia. Is it suggested that Fishlock has "Oomph"? Or Edrich? Or that Smith (P.) of Essex is animated in a spine-tingling way? The more I read about this "Oomph" case—and after reading about it in eleven papers I can claim to speak with a certain authority—the more convinced I become that the whole thing is a side-issue, without significance of any kind to thinking cricketers.

"But in the judge's view the statement that any word having the meaning of, or a reference to, sex appeal must be rejected for registration was too wide in these days."

What on earth is meant by "in these days"? What shallow, what unworthy imputation of narrow-minded squeamishness is directed here against the giants of other days? Are we to believe that W. G. Grace or Tom Hayward, forsooth, would have declined to register a word on the ground that it had a reference to sex appeal?

However, I must keep my temper. I must not lose my sense of proportion, even when I read that Dr. F. J. O. Coddington, the stipendiary magistrate at Bradford, has ruled that lumbago is "a mere triviality." Would Dr. Coddington—and I ask this in a perfectly calm, level voice—would Dr. Coddington dismiss the fibrositis that attacked Hammond during the 1945 season as "trivial"? Or it may have been sciatica. The point is that something of the sort attacked England's captain and confined him for a considerable period, if not to bed at least to the pavilion. If that is to be regarded as a trivial matter it seems to me we may as well give up playing cricket altogether.

I am not advocating that newspapers should devote all their space to cricket intelligence. That, in my opinion, is too extreme a view. I only ask that they should give me the bare facts about Australia's resources (and in particular the names of her bowlers) rather than fill column

after column with descriptions of M. Molotov's travelling arrangements and the views of legal gentlemen who, however distinguished in their own field, have probably never opened a *Wisden* in their lives.

I have just found a note in the *Daily Telegraph* about a man called Tribe, of Victoria. "The selectors' veto on Tribe's appearance at Perth," they tell me, "is held to have a sinister significance." That is all. Who is this Tribe? A left-handed wicket-keeper? The fastest in-swinging in the world to-day? I race through my eleven papers, eagerly scanning every nook and cranny in search of some clue to the performance of this vetoed menace, and what do I find? I find this:

"A retired colonel, proprietor of a Margate hotel, who slapped the face of one of his chambermaids, had his action endorsed by the Margate Recorder to-day."

It turned out that the girl was hysterical and the treatment was in accordance with the accepted principles of first-aid.

Is there no retired colonel in the house who will perform the same service for me? Otherwise, with all this worry about trundlers, my condition may become so grave that not even a bolo would restore me to normal. It is hardly too much to say that, when I am beyond human aid, the words "Bye-Bye, Tribe," may be found painted on my roof.

H. F. E.

### Vain Precedent

BY music's magic power old Troy arose—  
What happy and untrammelled days were those!  
No private minstrel now, we must surmise,  
Would get the permits for such enterprise.

W. K. H.



"Can't you talk about ANYTHING but the weather?"





"... and the roast ox went off in 1759."

### Co-operation of the Public

"I WOULD emphasize," said the Regional Fuel Officer, as he stamped my kerosene card with the rural district council's official stamp—"I would emphasize that every care should be taken to exercise the strictest economy during the next few months."

"The winter is going to be a bad one?" I suggested.

"I cannot speak for the probable state of the weather," said the Fuel Officer severely. "But supplies of coal are unlikely to get any better. We are relying on the co-operation of the public."

"You mean we must burn wood?" I ventured.

He regarded the opposite wall steadily. "By all means burn wood," he conceded.

"Or coke?" I suggested.

"Coke," said the Fuel Officer, "may

be obtainable off the ration in varying quantities. That will depend upon your own supplier." He folded my kerosene card neatly and gave it to me with as much reverence as if it had contained sealed orders.

"This will enable you to obtain a limited quantity of paraffin for oil lamps and heaters."

I do not know what else he imagined we should be using paraffin for. It became obvious to me that he had little imagination.

"It is essential that you should appreciate the seriousness of the coal position this winter," he went on. "Have you ever tried making your own fuel? Slack blocks?"

"I can't say that I have," I told him. It was one of the few things nobody seemed to do in Burma.

"This is a sample of the substance," said the Fuel Officer. He picked up a

piece of mineral from the ledge that ran the length of his room. "I made this myself," he added, not without pride.

"You take a keen interest in your work," I observed.

"I am anxious to impress upon the public a sense of duty," he replied, without a change of emotion. "You will find that coal dust, well dampened and mixed with cement in the proportion of seven to one, produces a satisfactory answer to some of your difficulties."

"And these others?" I asked him, indicating various specimens that thronged the ledge. "Are they all your own work?"

"These are merely examples of various kinds of coal," he told me. "This is the ordinary house knob, and this is a piece of Derby Bright. This is the industrial coke, and this is a piece

of Coalite. These are Ovoids, obtainable off the ration, and excellent for small heating stoves, though rather more expensive."

"And this," he said fondly, "is pure anthracite."

"In short supply, no doubt?"

"Very," said the Fuel Officer grimly.

We came to the end of the exhibition at last. "There's just the matter of my change of address," I told him. "You were going to make a note of it."

"I will," he said, turning back to his desk. "Let me see, the name is—?"

"O'Darrell," I told him. "Two r's, two l's, initials P. R. Address, Chanctonbury, Beeches Road, Luffington."

He made the necessary notes.

"I gave you your kerosene card?" said the Fuel Officer.

"I've got everything," I told him, as he opened the door for me. "I'll try some of that slack."

Our first fire has therefore been quite a success, and I never remember having a more interesting one. The piece of slack was a bit cementy, and the industrial coke had lost a lot of its goodness through being handled so much. But the pure anthracite was quite a joy, and it was fortunate that I had the shopping-bag with me at the time. The Fuel Officer must agree that there is the strictest need for economy.

## The Incendiary

ONE of Simpson's less endearing habits is suddenly to burst into flame in public places. Personally I have enough self-assurance to walk unselfconsciously down Regent Street with a man in overalls or a duke (though it is fair to say that so far as dukes are concerned this is not a daily occurrence), but I find it extremely embarrassing to walk about with a man who suddenly gives throat to a wild yell and flings off his jacket and even in extreme cases, such as last week on Preston station, undoes his braces.

Simpson argues that he puts his pipe in his pocket without first knocking out the ash only when he becomes really wrapped up in an intellectual conversation, and that the fact that all his pockets have large holes burned in them is a tribute to the activity of his mind.

"Ordinary people who do not indulge in intellectual conversation naturally do not set fire to themselves," he says, "but if it is a choice between bursting into flames and giving up

intellectual conversation I should be ashamed to choose the latter course."

Some time ago he conceived the brilliant plan of lining one of his pockets with tin. An ingenious aunt with whom he happened to be staying at the time carried out this rather difficult task, and it seemed at first that the need for abandoning intellectual conversation was gone for ever. Unfortunately Simpson very rarely happened to slip his burning pipe into the correct tin-lined pocket, and outbreaks of fire, though slightly less frequent, still occurred often enough to cause perturbation to himself and sorrow to his friends. He paid another visit to the obliging aunt, and this time she lined all his pockets with tin.

It is a remarkable thing in this world of trial and tribulation, however, that too often a man emerges from one dark forest only to find himself entering another. It was true that his friends could now accompany him down Piccadilly without suddenly smelling smoke, but the tin-lined pockets, into each of which Simpson had dropped a good deal of small change, gave forth an abominable noise of rattling. People turned their heads, imagining that a procession of late-nineteenth-century motor-cars must be passing along the street, and Simpson as a companion became less enviable even than before.

He has had the tin lining removed, and his present method is to carry a bottle of water and a small garden-squirt in his inside pocket. Immediately the conflagration commences he hands the filled squirter to his companion and indicates the location of the outbreak. His friend directs the

jet until the smoke subsides, and then they continue their conversation with as much nonchalance as they can command.

I was travelling on the Underground with Simpson the other day when a rather absurd situation arose. The familiar smell of smoke assailed my nostrils, but as we were standing in a dense mass of humanity and Simpson was two yards away and therefore far beyond my reach I merely signalled to him across the intervening heads. He did not seem to follow my meaning, but merely signalled back in an inane sort of way. This went on for a good five minutes, and then I suddenly felt a hot burning pain at the side of my leg, and realized that it was my own clothes that were on fire. I managed to beat out the flames, and I did not tell Simpson about it when we got out at the next station. Human nature is a curious thing, and when he asked me what I had been signalling to him about I said that I merely wanted to call his attention to the fact that we were approaching our station. No doubt a psychologist could explain this strange reserve on my part.

During the afternoon I asked him, quite casually, where he had purchased his miniature garden-squirt. I said it seemed a handy size for watering aspidistras.

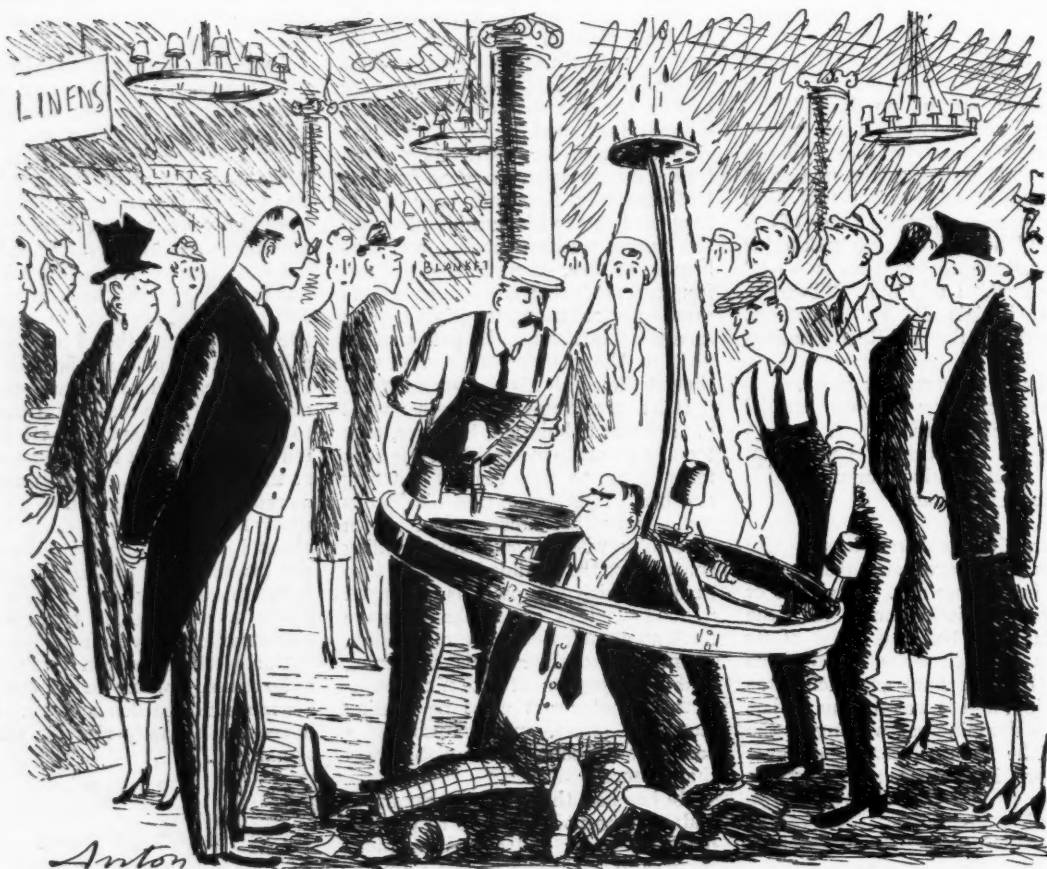
## Still Going Strong

"There is in this tapestry a figure which recurs so often that one might call him the *genius loci*, a man with a cherubic look, though in the end time and care drew their lines even on his face, Plum Walker."

Article on Lord's in Sunday paper.



"You must excuse us, Rector—I'm afraid we're rather upside down."



*"Permit me to say, sir, that the management sincerely regret any inconvenience you may have been caused."*

### Man of Letters

SEE where he moves with brisk but easy paces  
 Braving our weathers with a manly shrug,  
 No rainswept frowns, no shivering grimaces  
 Obscure the calmness native to his mug,  
 A simple postman, placidly ignoring  
 The well-gummed secrets scattered in his wake,  
 Firm on his daily task, however boring;  
 This is a man of men and no mistake.

Are there no moments when his wandering fancies  
 Turn to the hidden mysteries that he leaves,  
 The news, the bills, the scandals and romances  
 Emitted widely from his daily sheaves?  
 Nay, though immune to others' joy or trouble,  
 I wonder what strange visitings must come  
 To one who, on his own beat, gives the double  
 Knock at his own front door. They should be rum.

I wonder, too, when freed from duty's fetters  
 If in the quiet evening hours he spends  
 A well-earned leisure writing copious letters  
 (This I esteem unlikely) to his friends,  
 And does he, of a Sunday, take his nippers  
 Out for a brisk walk to digest their meals  
 Or, preferably, pass the day in slippers  
 Easing the corns his outdoor gait conceals?

One thing we know, and firmly be it stated.  
 All through his long beat he may justly boast  
 There is no footfall keenlier awaited  
 Than his by Woman eager for the post.  
 Through him alone the constant hope She nurses  
 Of getting something, be it what it may.  
 So, postman, like the man renowned in verses,  
 With you it's roses, roses all the way. DUM-DUM.





## PENSIONED OFF

"Ah well, my boy, 'Things like that you know must be,  
After a famous victory'."

## Impressions of Parliament

### Business Done:

**Monday, October 14th.**—House of Commons: Report on the Services.

House of Lords: The Closed Shop.

**Tuesday, October 15th.**—House of Commons: A Mixed Bag.

**Wednesday, October 16th.**—House of Commons: The Fires Do Not Burn.

**Thursday, October 17th.**—House of Commons: Mr. Morrison is Shocked.

**Monday, October 14th.**—To your scribe it is always a comforting reflection that the House of Commons—the Grand Inquest of the Nation, as it is called in times of formality or pomposity—shares most of the failings, as well as the qualities, of lesser beings. Just as, for instance, some particular word or phrase will keep recurring in the conversation of some people, so it is with Parliament.

This afternoon, the code-word, so to say, was “travesty.” Astonished Minister after astonished Minister found his well-intentioned replies to questions thus described. It did not matter what was the subject. Anything from the overcrowding of London's streets by traffic to the economic position in the British zone of Germany.

After a time the catchword became a trifle wearying, and hardly anyone had the heart to use it in the debates which followed Question-time.

Which was, no doubt, a considerable deprivation, because such controversial items as the “closed shop,” Franco's Government, and the powers of trade unions were under debate.

However, Question-time passed happily, if not very quickly. It certainly passed too quickly for Mr. RUPERT DE LA BÈRE, who asked almost tearfully whether something could not be done to ensure that the Minister of Agriculture's questions (there were twenty-five on the Paper to-day) were sometimes reached. He added that “food was so very important to the people of Britain”—a statement which seemed to surprise somewhat the diplomats in their gallery. Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, Leader of the House, promised to see if something could be done about it.

Mr. TOM WILLIAMS, the Minister of Agriculture, appeared to contemplate without enthusiasm the approaching end of his close season, but Mr. JOHN HYND, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister in charge of German Affairs, whose period of grilling will be cut in proportion, looked correspondingly pleased.

There were two curious passages in Question-time. Mr. WILSON HARRIS, who, although an Independent Member for Cambridge University, sits with the Liberals, complained with some bitterness that the Great North Road at Stevenage (of all places) had been closed on September 24th. Mr. ALFRED BARNES, the Minister of Transport, replied that it had been closed to allow of the holding of an ancient fair, but doubted whether he had any power to prevent the closure of the road in these circumstances.



### TRUST FUND

“I wish to appeal on behalf of the Government to all members of the Forces who receive this money to delay spending it as long as they possibly can.”—*The Secretary of State for War.*

By the time the House had recovered from its astonishment at the thought of a Government which did not hesitate to reconstruct Stevenage from top to bottom but shrank from interfering with its annual fair, the next subject had been reached.

This was a more-in-sorrow-than-anger complaint from cheery Mr. JAMES HUDSON that there was no Belisha crossing from the Houses of Parliament to No. 5, Old Palace Yard, where M.P.s go to work on their correspondence. There's one just outside the House, answered Mr. BARNES, and it's only an extra fifty yards if you use it.

But, replied rotund Mr. HUDSON, some Members cannot afford another fifty yards when there's a division on. This vision of the Hudson Handicap—

or is it the Chief Whip's Stakes?—put the House in a good mood and calmed the atmosphere for what had been advertised as a searching, searing debate on the “closed-shop” principle in industry.

It arose from a motion, moved by Mr. GEORGE ISAACS, the Minister of Labour, that all contracts made with the Government should contain a clause granting all employees fair wages.

Both sides employed a good deal of eloquence on the subject of the closed shop, which the Conservatives, by and large, condemned, but which the Labour Members supported. Mr. NESS EDWARDS, for the Government, promised that Ministers would “watch” the development of closed shops—a proceeding which Mr. HAROLD MACMILLAN, chief Conservative spokesman, described as “feeble.” And that was about as near as anyone got to inflammatory language on this combustible subject.

Their Lordships were discussing a shop that is too closed—the armed Forces. Major-General Lord BRIDGMAN, who did so great a job as Director-General of the Home Guard in the most difficult days of the war, raised the question of the failure of the voluntary recruiting campaign. He did not think the Government was doing all it could to build up the Forces.

LORD PAKENHAM, Under-Secretary for War, wearing the expression of a conjurer who has groped in vain for the expected rabbit, admitted that the recruiting drive had failed, and added that the present position could only be described as “serious.” The Government would see what could be done about it. All the world was passing through a grim and disappointing phase of history—but Britain would be armed for the fray while making every possible effort to bring peace to all mankind.

And there, for the moment, their Lordships left it.

**Tuesday, October 15th.**—Members seemed to be competing with each other in saying unexpected things to-day.

And your scribe, in a desire to preserve for posterity some of those wise (and other) remarks, appends them:

Mr. Joe Westwood, Secretary of State for Scotland: “We always, so far as possible, take into account all relevant considerations . . .”

“There might be time [to alter the Landlord and Tenant Act], possibly not next year nor the year after, but some time.”

Mr. Fred Bellenger, Secretary of State for War: "War is a desperate business. . . ."

"I have never heard of a soldier refusing leave because the train seats were hard."

Mr. George Wallace, a Labour Back-bencher: "Cupid does not wait for King's Regulations. The Government should adopt the slogan: 'Fit to fight, fit to marry.'"

Mr. Anthony Greenwood, another Labour Back-bencher: "This Government was elected because the people of this country wanted a Government not bound by precedent."

The Prime Minister: "As a rule, I think Ministers should be in this country."

There were a lot more. But the greatest joy of the afternoon arose from a question by Mr. PETER FREEMAN about "experiments" conducted by doctors on children in orphans' homes. Shocking.

People in the public galleries who found it difficult to hear Mr. HERBERT MORRISON's reply might have been excused for thinking they had drifted into a gala meeting of sadistic Nazi scientists, for there was a roar of laughter of a rib-cracking quality not often heard these days.

Mr. MORRISON did his part superbly. With the grimmest and most abashed of expressions he frankly admitted the "experiment." Mr. FREEMAN prepared to pounce. But Mr. MORRISON went on to explain that the experiment had been to give the children a lot of extra sweets—just to see what happened. And of course the children had to be watched carefully, to ensure that no important reaction was missed.

"I do assure the House," pleaded Mr. MORRISON solemnly, "that the experiment would have been stopped at once if there had been any danger!"

Laughter died abruptly when Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, leading the Opposition, asked for an assurance that the film which, it had been reported, was to be made of the hanging of the Nazi leaders in Nuremberg would not be shown in public. The whole House echoed his demand, and Mr. ATTLEE at once gave an assurance that no film was to be made and that he was certainly against the public exhibition of the still photographs that were to be taken for historical record.

Mr. BELLENGER announced that he proposed to set up yet another committee to inquire into the workings of military justice. He added a list of some of the "irregularities" which had led to the quashing of the paratroopers' sentences arising from the alleged mutiny in Malaya.

And so to a debate on a Bill to substitute cupro-nickel coins for the part-silver ones now current. This and a few other little items were passed, and everybody went home early.

Wednesday, October 16th. — Mr. ERNEST BEVIN, the Foreign Secretary, so long absent in Paris, as leader of the British delegation to the peace conference, was back in the House to-day. He got a loud—and completely non-Party—cheer when he answered a question. This came from that humanist, Mr. SKEFFINGTON-LODGE, who asked that the three men acquitted after exhaustive trial by the Nuremberg Tribunal should be given safe transit to some place where they would be protected from victimization.

Mr. BEVIN replied that as the men were in the United States zone of Germany, he had no responsibility. Mr. SKEFFINGTON-LODGE remarked that a second trial for the men was "vindictive, and in my judgment, indecent." To his own obvious surprise, this sentiment gained him a cheer of agreement from all sides.

Dr. EDITH SUMMERSKILL, of the Ministry of Health, fended off demands for increases in—sugar ("We'll see next year"), tea ("We simply have not enough in hand"), milk ("If we give more to some, others will have to have less"), and bread ("We'll do that the moment it's safe"). It says a good deal for her personal charm (which is unrated) that she got away with all this unscathed.

Nobody thought Mr. EMANUEL SHINWELL, the Minister of Fuel, would get away unscathed from the debate on coal supplies which followed. But he was, in truth, only very slightly

scathed. It was an extraordinarily matey debate, and everybody was kind (or kindish) to everybody else. Even Mr. SHINWELL himself, usually a cross between a Spitfire and a Churchill tank, with a spot of Commando thrown in, was gentle. Captain HARRY CROOKSHANK, leading speaker for the Conservatives, was witty and searching but also gentle. He gave the "world record in self-contradiction" to Mr. SHINWELL for his statements about the need (or otherwise) for economy in coal.

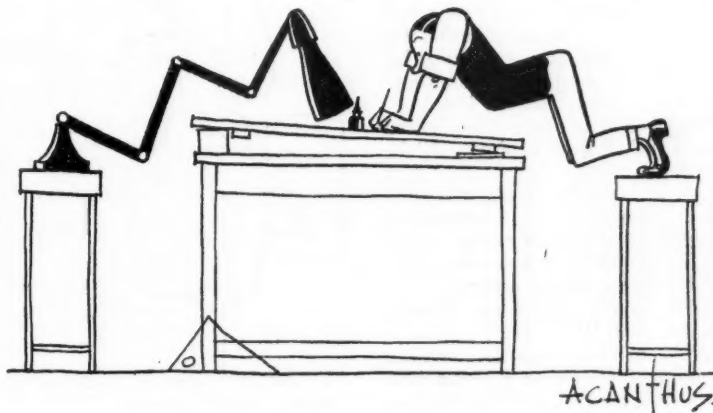
Mr. SHINWELL, with the teeniest trace of acid, replied that his apparent inconsistency was really the work of the "scurrilous and disgusting" Tory Press, who had torn his remarks from their context. However, he was not happy about our coal stocks. But since rationing was impracticable, the only remedy was voluntary economy.

"That attitude," said Major GWILYM LLOYD GEORGE, "is too optimistic. And your warnings are not always consistent!"

Things never got rougher than that, and popular Mr. HUGH GAITSKELL, Parliamentary Secretary to the Fuel Ministry, wound up the debate in something of the atmosphere of a Ladies' Sewing Circle in an Olde Worlde village.

Thursday, October 17th.—Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, to whose ability as a maker of phrases the country owes much, added one to your scribe's little anthology to-day. Said he: "To deliberately plan for an all-night sitting shocks me." He was resisting a proposal that next week's debate on foreign affairs should be so prolonged.

We shall see, next week, whether he is shocked.





## Poor Hopstede

JAMES was walking on his toes and carrying a large flat parcel.

"Why do you whistle in Bond Street?" I demanded, pinking him in the gizzard with my umbrella. He smiled sweetly.

"Hopstede is within," he said.

"Hopstede?"

"You must remember Hopstede, who used to decorate the parlour chimney?"

"That gamboge thing of cows paddling near a ruin?"

"I know it's not poor Hopstede's best. It caught his genius on the wrong hoof, as you might say, midway between his Mills and Marmalade Period and his Fossils and Liquorice Phase."

"I never understood how you could stomach it at all."

"Purely out of respect for my Aunt Fanny's judgment. The liquid resources in the Met. Wat. Board she also left me were in the most perfect taste."

"I think it's a terrible picture," I said.

"So do I," James whispered, looking round sharply over his shoulder, "but don't say so in here." He beckoned, and we found ourselves in a lofty salon, full of men in rich suits. Here and there was a fleshy oil, or a little clay bull stamping a private rhythm on a lacquered table.

"I should like you to buy my Hopstede," said James, grandly, as if he were conferring the freedom of Edinburgh on the man in the Guard's tie.

"A good one?" asked the man, slashing at James's knots with a golden knife.

"You'll be surprised," said James.

The man fought his way elegantly through several thicknesses of *The Times* newspaper and hovered with professional glumness over the naked Hopstede. After a few minutes of this he screwed a small telescope into his eye and began combing the anatomy of the cows. James looked bored.

"Did I tell you Uncle Wilfred had bought another Buff Orpington?" he asked me.

"This is certainly Hopstede," said the man, disengaging his eye from the telescope with a faint smacking sound. "But Hopstede in a loose moment. That sky, the animals' quarters—"

"Quite, quite," murmured James, hurriedly.

"I will consult my partner," said the man, and took Hopstede to visit a man with an even finer tie who was dusting

a lady with two heads at the other end of the salon.

"I expect they've sent the boy out for a theodolite," said James, when twenty minutes later the telescopes snapped shut.

"We're sorry," said the man, "but it isn't for us."

"A great pity," James murmured. "Perhaps the National Farmers' Union would be interested?"

"Though indubitably Hopstede's, the quality of the mud is much below par."

"I said you'd be surprised," said James, bundling Hopstede back into what was left of *The Times*. "Where do we go from here?"

"Auction," said the man, mentioning a famous name further up the street.

"They'll love it."

"Would you ask forty?"

"Try thirty." We all shook hands warmly.

The porter at the auction-rooms came back like a boomerang to regret it wasn't a Hopstede.

"Then who is it?" James demanded, furiously. "Leonardo da Vinci?"

"Dunno, I'm shaw," replied the porter. "Mebbe it's a Fike."

Then began rather a painful pilgrimage up Bond Street. Towards the upper end of that thoroughfare the experts weren't even bothering to do poor Hopstede the honours with a telescope. . . .



"My pet aversion is cats—such silent, stealthy creatures."

"I've carted the brute all the way from the country," James growled, thrusting Hopstede into a dark corner of the bus, "and I'm hanged if I'll cart him back again."

We got off quickly, but a moment later a helpful young woman caught us up, with Hopstede. Then we took a taxi to Waterloo. As we crossed Westminster Bridge James, who was in an ugly mood, said a number of very brutal things about poor Hopstede and finished by whizzing him out of the window. Catching the evening light better in my opinion than he had ever done before, Hopstede floated gently past the upper deck of a tram, missed two sea-gulls by a quill's-breadth, paused to consider the sugar beauties of the House of Commons and dived bravely into the bosom of Father Thames. Nothing more was said. . . .

When our train drew out James was still in a blue mood, and the fact that his neighbour, a fat, white man, was enveloping him in heavy gusts of cigar smoke filled me with anxiety.

"Damn Hopstede!" James muttered to the Battersea Power Station. "And damn all human incinerators!"

The fat man, blowing such a big cloud that James disappeared altogether, turned to his companion.

"So I said to him, I said, 'One of these days Hopstede is going all the way up.'"

"How did he come back on that?" asked his chum, a crinkly fellow at work on a smaller cigar.

"He tried to make out Hopstede had his off days. 'Who hasn't?' I asked. 'I know what I'm doing and I'm buying every Hopstede I can lay hands on, good, bad and indifferent.'"

"And what do you have to pay for a bad one?"

"When I'm on to anything as good as Hopstede, my dear chap, I don't haggle."

It seemed quite a good moment to go out into the corridor. ERIC.

"The show went on when fire broke out behind the screen of the Regal Cinema, Bexleyheath, but a fire-engine stood by outside in case of any further outbreak.

"Scenery curtains had caught alight but the cinema staff subdued the flames.

"Meanwhile nearly 2,000 people watched the film—while smouldering members floated down from the wings to the stage."

*Egyptian paper.*

Oh well, if they'd paid their subscriptions . . .

## RESTAURANT



## RESTAURANT



## RESTAURANT



## Style is What You Need.

**H**E first presented himself in answer to an advertisement which, he said, carried a particular appeal to him in his declining years.

The Head could not see him till the break, so I sent him away.

At the appointed hour he returned and I took him to the Head, who sent him away again while he thought it over. Now he has been back for the last time and the Head "will write to him."

The point I wish to make is that he saluted me each time he appeared, and again when he left, in addition to saluting the Head in my presence. I have been trying to salute the same way in front of a looking-glass and I find it impossible.

At first I thought it was a naval salute of so many fingers instead of so many guns; then that it was modelled on a policeman who has dance-tickets for sale on your doorstep. I am wiser now.

I should explain that he wore a high-crowned bowler reminiscent of the driver of a horse-bus; and a tufty moustache more full-blown one side than the other which he would brush with the back of his hand after each salute as if it were something he were trying to get out of his mouth.

The drill commenced with heels apart and toes turned inward, pigeon-wise. This allowed him to spring his toes out and snap his heels together, as Fig. 2, after which he would alter his stance from bow-legged to knock-kneed, as if closing a pair of shears.

The next thing was to straighten his back, which was like that of a prehistoric skeleton in a natural history museum, being all knobs, links and

hinges. As he drew himself erect they could be heard going into place like the couplings of a goods train.

As a finale he stuck out his chin, a feat which would not be noticed by many because his chin, when at rest, receded and became part of his neck, being gathered into it like needlework.

The apple of his throat was thus all that came forward, showing that the will to look pugnacious was mightier than the ability to do so.

Afterwards his hand flew to his hat, four fingers and a thumb displayed with pride and wide apart, knobbly with rheumatics; and like that he stood until it was time to collapse into the position which had preceded Fig. 2.

Only when we parted did I pluck up courage and ask if he would tell me what particular form of saluting this was.

Could it, I wondered, be some brigade?

"Sir," he said loftily, "I served my time outside a restaurant in Greek Street called Dinner with one N. And I take it that style in a salute is what you need most in a porter at a school of this sort."

o o

"After a chase over the greater part of Plymouth, an escaped monkey was shot from a roof in a busy shopping street here yesterday.

"Before escaping, the monkey attacked its owner, who feared that it might injure children reported to be feeding it.

"Gilt-edgeds were resistant were astonished when the monkey came in one of their windows, but they gave it bread and milk."—English paper published in Austria.

They're ready for anything on the Stock market.

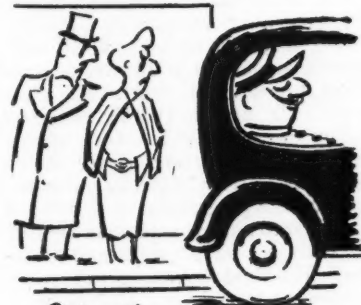
## RESTAURANT



## RESTAURANT



## AURANT



Sprint

## At the Play

"PICCADILLY HAYRIDE"  
(PRINCE OF WALES)

GOING to see SID FIELD for the first time is like catching one's first glimpse of the Albert Memorial or any other well-established national monument about which everything has already been said. If he failed to move me very much, if he failed altogether to provide me with any of the abdominal agonies I had been led to expect, it is probably the fault of all those who had told me how terribly funny he was, and my testimony should therefore be taken lightly. I want to see him again in something better. About the immense charm of the lazy smile with which he gets into two-way communication with his audience I agree at once, and of course I agree about his evident ability in cockney burlesque; but to my mind he relies far too much on the first, while the range of the second is impossible to estimate owing to the appalling poverty of his material. There is no attempt here to make him part of the whole; he appears in a series of isolated music-hall sketches, only one of which, a riotous scene at an organ, really comes off. A snooker-lesson, the sort of thing which Harry Tate did with much greater effect, is full of saddening puns, even on the word "cue," and a very old-fashioned drunk-scene actually contains the ancient gag: "What time is it?" "Thursday." "I get out here," or words to that effect.

The show is hard, noisy and unequal, but it can boast four positive winners. A French ventriloquist, ROBERT LAMOURET, manipulates a gallic Donald Duck magnificently. If anyone is an artist it is M. LAMOURET. His duck could walk into the Old Vic company to-morrow. TERRY THOMAS gives an exceedingly funny and clever sketch as an announcer who has forgotten the records for a programme of singers and is obliged to impersonate them himself, not even excepting Tauber and Robeson. The ROSS SISTERS go in for such fantastic contortionery that I could only watch them with any ease of

mind by pretending they were problems in geometry and not three charming young women. And a boy called VICTOR FELDMAN, who cannot be more than fourteen, teases the drums with formidable virtuosity.

On the side of sentiment the best item is a Chinese allegory, ingeniously handled, with attractive masks. ALAN and BLANCHE LUND dance well and JERRY DESMONDE'S fooling makes a helpful foil.

## "ON THE WAY" (ARTS)

To what? To a nice collective



TRIPTYCH

MR. SID FIELD, M. ROBERT LAMOURET, MR. TERRY THOMAS

maternity clinic, so far as I could discover, conducted no doubt on the most aseptic robot principles. This Scandinavian frolic is somewhat different in form and texture from the FIELD entertainment. It is steeped not so much in Ibsenated gloom as in the pretentious solemnity of revolutionary youth, its drolls being Marx Brothers of the deadlier kind. A wonderfully self-important young woman announces that she is going to have a baby, adding that she is extremely proud of this feat and assumes that her family will be the same; and when her father, a kindly old landowner known for his liberal outlook, finds the news

a little hard to assimilate and slaps her face she returns in high dudgeon to her communist chums, a dreary pair of young owls modestly planning to remove the last disgraceful vestiges of contentment from a cozened world. The only member of the family who takes a good view of the venture is her brother, a blimpish fellow who up to now has heartily disapproved of her independent way of life. He slips her forty pounds, which she immediately hands over to the Party funds, instead of, as I should have thought wiser, laying in a Moses basket and other nursery necessities. Why this ossified young warrior should think it such a splendid idea for his sister to have a baby is a fascinating line of speculation, but speculation it remains. Nor does Mr. HELGE KROG explain the girl's strange matriarchal tendencies. She insists, with a tigerish sense of property out of all keeping with her beliefs, that the child shall be hers and hers alone, although this decision so upsets its father that the pith and bite of the propaganda he churns out for the Party is ruinously affected. There is, it is true, a covering suggestion that she may have switched her affection to the local boss, but it is unthinkable that any girl, however perverse and silly, could feel emotion for a man who by his own confession has sat on every human impulse until he is nothing more than a manifesto in horn spectacles. We leave her bleakly facing a bleak future entirely of her own making; and we do this with considerable relief, wondering not a little that the Arts Council should support so fatiguing a piece.

The skill with which Miss YVONNE COULETTE plays the girl almost persuades us to forget the absurdities of the part. Mr. FREDERICK RICHTER as the father and Mr. DEREK BIRCH as an honest materialist introduce a welcome human note. ERIC.

"The shortage of Men's Quality Wear for which — is famous is still as acute as ever."—Advertisement.

So if you want an acute shortage—



## At the Opera

### "SNOW-MAIDEN" (SADLER'S WELLS)

SADLER'S Wells Opera opened their new season with RIMSKY-KORSAKOV'S *Snow-Maiden*. Most opera stories are about heroines who love too much, but this heroine *Snegourootchka* could not love at all. She asked nothing better than to be able to break her heart like all the lucky Traviatas, Santuzzas, Toscas and so on, but she was even denied their ecstasies of woe, for her heart was frozen. Even a hammer and chisel are of no avail in this peculiar calamity, as those who are brought face to face for the first time with a slab of Iceland cod know to their cost. All you can do is to put the depressing object into the airing-cupboard or on top of the boiler and forget about it. The danger is that you may forget it too long. That is where most cod-thawers come to grief, and where *Snegourootchka*, the Snow-Maiden, came to grief too.

*Snegourootchka* (OLIVE DYER) was the daughter of *King Frost* (SYDNEY JACK) and *Fairy Spring* (EDITH COATES), and she was kept hidden deep in the forest away from the attentions of the Sun-God *Yarilo* and his fiery kisses, lest she should melt. In revenge *Yarilo* visited his anger on the land of the *Berendays*, who had cold summers and unripened corn until their *Tsar* (TOM CULBERT), sitting in his red palace painting flowers and listening to the balalaika, was at his wits' end. One snowy day at the end of winter *Snegourootchka* persuaded her parents to allow her to come and live among mortals because she so loved music. Such was her beauty that *Shepherd Lehl* (VALETTA IACOPI) and rich *Misgir* (IVOR EVANS) both fell in love with her. She loved *Lehl's* singing, but neither he nor *Misgir* interested her one whit, even though *Misgir* deserted his betrothed *Koupava* (VERA TERRY) for love of her. *Koupava* complained to the *Tsar* who, when he saw *Snegourootchka*, realized in a flash that she was the cause of the sunless summers and unripened corn. So he offered a rich reward to anyone who could melt her heart before sunrise.

However, her heart remained obstinately at forty-below-zero all night in spite of *Lehl's* singing and the spirited efforts of the Sadler's Wells Opera Ballet, whose Russian dances bathed ordinary onlookers in sympathetic perspiration. At last, near dawn, she called her mother *Spring* to teach her how to love. *Spring* rose from the lake with her attendant Flowers, who

danced a very pretty ballet and whispered love-secrets into *Snegourootchka's* ear. The passionate *Misgir* then appeared and acted so successfully as airing-cupboard (or boiler) that *Snegourootchka's* heart began to thaw. The *Tsar* and his people arrived at this moment to honour the Sun-God with mass-weddings and *Misgir* and *Snegourootchka* were married, but alas! *Snegourootchka*, now nearly defrosted by *Misgir*, forgot about *Yarilo*. The sun rose, and at his touch she melted right away. Poor *Misgir* jumped into the lake, but the *Tsar*, rather cold-bloodedly, told his people not to worry because now the corn would ripen.

BARBARA HESELTINE has successfully captured the naïf quality of this Russian fairy-story, and her scenery and costumes are charming. The

general effect of the acting and singing is good and the words are audible, though the quality of the individual voices (with one or two exceptions) reflects the dearth of good singers which we at present suffer. *Snow-Maiden* is a delicious opera, and the music, which is intensely Russian, radiates a freshness and child-like delight that one associates usually with Glinka. It will be a surprise to those who think of RIMSKY-KORSAKOV'S music as always having a strong Oriental flavour. At present the performance at the Wells lacks pace—the opera is in fact very long (over three hours) and seems longer in spite of the fillip it receives from the excellent ballet. LAWRENCE COLLINGWOOD, the conductor, will no doubt be able to pull it together after a few performances. D. C. B.



"Plutocrat!"

## Not a Moment to Lose

**I**T seems to me—and I hope the Lord President won't mind my mentioning it—that in their schemes for reconstruction and reform the Government have omitted one essential: the Popularization of the Civil Service.

If you think for a moment (this is, I find, the most tactful method of approach when actually you don't want people to think, but only to listen while you tell them) you will see that on the popularity of the Civil Service all the Government's plans depend. For if, as our sadder commentators insist, we are all to become Civil Servants sooner rather than later, we should, presumably, be cajoled into liking what we are to become. For, after all, the Common Man and Woman have been made to think they are somebody: they can hardly be asked to sacrifice their heroic stature to become a B.B.C. Variety joke.

Consider. Did you at any time

during the late war hear a kindly reference to the Civil Service? Did Eisenhower, Montgomery, Alexander, Cunningham, Tedder or even Churchill once say "... and the gallant men and women of the Civil Service, toiling at their desks, without whom ..."? I think not. Did one public person of lesser stature ever suggest that as well as the factory and kitchen fronts there was also a Civil Service front? Not in my hearing. Did the B.B.C. give us a special programme? No. Did the British film industry make of us so much as a documentary, let alone a feature, film? If so, it didn't reach my cinema. Did members of the forces visit Civil Service offices and tell how much they appreciated our work and what it meant to them out there? Not my office, they didn't. Did the Treasury (via H.M.S.O.), issue a paper-covered book, complete with photographs, showing the great work that—

No, indeed they didn't. Civil Service

morale was expected to remain high without pep talks and publicity.

However, you may think I am becoming a trifle shrill. Very well. Let us concentrate on the future. Let us, as they say, face it. If we are all to become Civil Servants we must take a pride in our status. Or, which would be tiresome, we may refuse it. Steps, therefore, should be taken to foster departmental pride. New entrants to, say, the War Office, should be told the history of the Service. It should be explained that though Holerith is all the rage now, the records of the soldiers who fought at Waterloo and Balaclava were kept in such and such a way and that even though we live in a revolution the spirit which animated those old record keepers still lives on into the present. The Admiralty of course has a rather easier task, being able to concentrate on Pepys. The Air Ministry, the Inland Revenue, the Ministry of Education, of Agriculture and Fisheries—but why should I go



"How do I get it so like, mum? Well, I just cuts off the bits I don't want."



*"Good—Eric's settling down nicely in his new school."*

into detail? Broad outline is all the greatest administrators ever give.

We shall also need a Chief of Civil Service Information. It will be his work to commend, rather than disparage, the number of forms filled in, filed and put to waste daily; to stress the tremendous burden of work now falling on these brilliant and devoted public servants, and to point out that even before the war no one received an answer under six weeks, whatever may have been the case in respect of so-called Private Enterprise; to—but again, why go into detail? I don't want the job.

And encouragement should be given about our future (no matter how distant) environment. After all, consider what the Army is being promised. Why shouldn't similar visions be conjured up to dazzle the T/C Gde III., who is, after all, not so very much lower than a private? Why shouldn't he hear rumours of chromium-plated canteens where the customary sausage

meat will be rendered less obnoxious by the progressively-designed mural decorations? Of rest-rooms where he can sleep in comfort, and sports rooms and playing-fields equipped with every modern device? Of provision for communal activities? Of real office furniture even in decentralized offices, and 100-watt lamps on every desk? And even, perhaps, of a trade union, which will call him out on strike just as though he were a real worker?

However, the Government may think all this unnecessary. I shall not be surprised. I shall remember instead how often they have been accused of failing to put first things first. I shall be charitable too, and suppose they imagine that the Civil Service is already enormously popular and that the Labour Exchanges are besieged and overwhelmed by the number of applicants.

In that case they might remove the Control of Engagement Order. I want to resign.

## The Seer

I AM not grumbling about no mending being done around here. I am the first to admit how busy my wife is, what with four young children, no maid, and all the rest. With my last garments in shreds, I approached her softly, kindly, hesitantly, apologetically, self-effacingly, almost invisibly, and said "My love, some day when you have nothing to do . . . when you are just sitting there basking, as it were, with the children out of sight and out of mind, and nothing remains to be done around the old homestead, and you are fully relaxed and yet well supplied with some mystic energy that comes you know not whence . . ." and then I paused, realizing this sounded slightly incredible.

"Well," she said, "what?"

Then the gift of second sight was vouchsafed me. "Why," I continued, "you'll be sixty-five years old."





### Facts Again

THE outstanding fact about seed-cake—my readers can hardly wait for me to get the words out—is that people either like it or don't. Historians say that whoever discovered seed-cake did so with an enigmatical smile at the trouble he was laying up for the opinionated, the anxiously polite and the people about to take a chance with tea-time visitors. They say also that they would rather attribute the discovery to Bacon than to Drake or Raleigh, because that first blending of cake with seeds would mean bagging the kitchen for the morning rather than sailing round the world. Whatever its origin, seed-cake has long had a firm niche in life, as both sides of the controversy can prove by harking back to their childhoods and remembering how they felt even more strongly about it then. A word, by the way, to those who associate the seed-cake of their childhood with golden syrup; early memories are apt to get telescoped, and it is doubtful if any of us had the golden syrup on the cake. A word, too, for those who associate the cake and the syrup with lamp-lighters and such; they mustn't worry if they can't write the poems they know themselves to be equal to deep down inside. Statisticians say the chances are all against it, for you can get the poetry part of a quite comprehensive library into about three quarters of a shelf, especially on India paper with double columns. Going back to seed-cake, I want to say that the hottest argument has never produced a word against the actual cake the seeds are embedded in; perhaps because only the avowed seed-lovers would be eating it, and they would hardly be the people to weaken their case by grumbling. Thus it is that, according to sociologists, seed-cake through the ages has come in for less criticism and more prejudice than any other cake they can think of offhand.

Mention of double columns reminds me of those Shakespeares illustrated with what are probably engravings and certainly very old-fashioned. The chief characteristics of these illustrations are close parallel lines, much drapery and an impression that it is going to thunder, and to the general public they are a clear indication that, whatever people say about nowadays, it has made some improvement there by doing away with illustrations altogether.

I should like to summarize the main facts about Shakespeare (because Shakespeare has an even firmer niche in life than seed-cake) and to begin with the confident statement that more people think Shakespeare wrote *Shakespeare* than think Bacon did, and that no one can imagine Shakespeare inventing seed-cake, which—say those psychologists who believe Shakespeare wrote *Shakespeare*—pretty well proves it. Baconians, as the people who believe the opposite are called, are more often heard of than met, but it is safe to assume that anyone meeting one would think of all the best arguments in the bus afterwards. I don't expect my readers to know how many Shakespeare plays there are, but statisticians who have counted recently say there are enough to cause mild disbelief; nothing serious, just enough to show interest.

I need hardly mention that Shakespeare is frequently quoted, and very often wrong, but that as the people who recognize misquotations are the people who are already known to be literary and don't want to make any more trouble than they do already one way and another, these misquotations are rarely corrected and the public is allowed to go on talking about gilding the lily; those knowing "gild" should be "paint," having to get it right themselves and trusting that their reputations will see them through what sounds like sheer ignorance. Lily-painters have their happiest moments when the quotation comes up in a crossword and the gilders find themselves a letter short; you can tell how clever these learned people know they are by the way they take the next mouthful of toast. Other facts about Shakespeare are that there are plays like the *Two Gentlemen of Verona* which no one has read but everyone would miss, that the most educated are the most apt to look for *Troilus and Cressida* in the Comedies volume, and that more people wonder if they should start pronouncing Cleopatra in what seems to be the right way than do anything practical about it; while there are so many pronunciations of Bolingbroke that no one can draw the line between idiosyncrasy, upbringing, and having seen it acted by people who called it that.

Now for a bit about cuff-turners, those kindly folk who get little enough attention from the Press but make up for it by telling shirt-owners for days beforehand that they are about to turn their cuffs, by holding the shirt up for comment before, during and after, and by pointing out, as they fold the cuffs back out of sight, that now the shirt-owner has what amounts to a new shirt. The process itself is simple enough, consisting of taking the cuffs off, turning them round and sewing them on back to front. Psychologists say its crux lies in the unpicking, because professional machining is both impressive and difficult to get apart. When once a cuff is off a shirt looks so unkempt and deserted that the cuff-turner's only thought is to get it back somehow. I hope I am not being too technical in pointing out to cuff-turners the pitfalls that wait for anyone machining a cuff along the front edge and hoping that the back edge, the one out of sight, is co-operating. I thought they would like a little sympathy, and the people who don't have to do this sort of thing will like to be reminded they don't. Statisticians, who tend to belong to the second category, say they have no idea what happens when a turned cuff wears out,

This issue of Punch, as in previous weeks, contains extra pages in accordance with our promise to compensate readers for the pages previously lost owing to the Printing Trade dispute.

or rather they know what happens—it just looks worn out—but don't know how it gets mended. I must also put in a few words for those who lengthen or shorten trousers by the turn-ups; just something to remind them that when they have unpicked the turn-ups and straightened the result out they will see suddenly what philosophy means by predetermination; for to adjust the turn-up is to alter the hem, and to alter the hem is either to bring the raw edge outside or bring about a length the trouser-owners did not brief them for, and to do a bit of wild tentative folding is to find themselves back where they started. In the end they will win through, though not before they have found for themselves that it is easier to make two trouser-legs two different lengths than both one length.

Lastly I shall give the facts about soap. Soap is divided, for the purposes of present-day shopping, into household and toilet soap; at least that is what shoppers have decided is probably the technical way to define them to shop-keepers who want to know what they propose to bust their coupons on. Soap-buyers do not give their answer without a certain amount of cogitation and recalling what they had fixed on before they left home, but they are rewarded with the feeling that they are fine responsible types. New or unused soap may be recognized by the fact that it is still in the cupboard and still has the printing on. For a short while after it begins to be used soap keeps its printing and still counts as new; then follows an uneventful period, and then the stage when we realize we had better clamp it on to a new piece or risk losing it in bits down the plug-hole—a stage which scientists cannot define by the weight and measurements of the soap, but which they say they can recognize when they reach it as well as the next person.

## Dormouse Blood

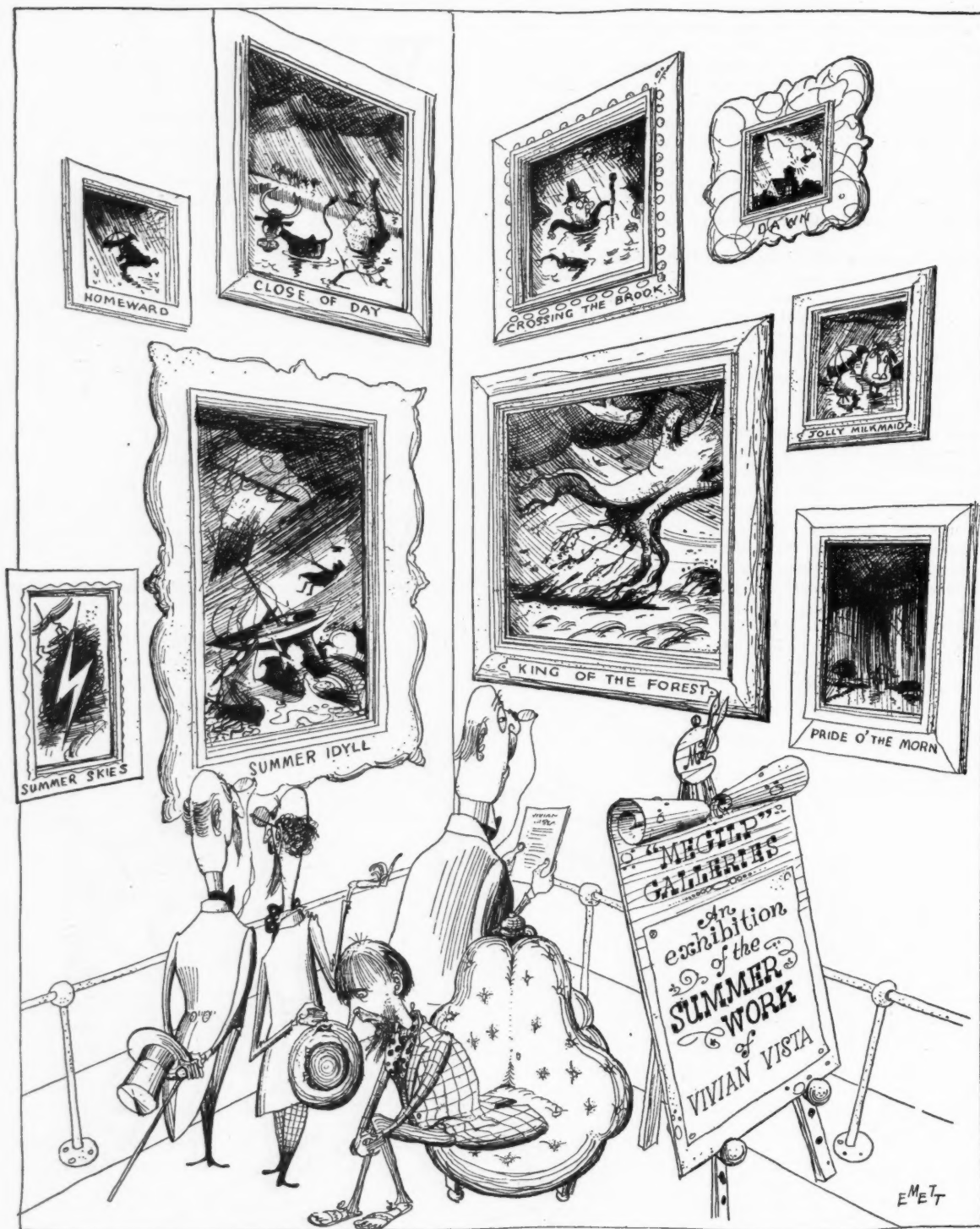
**W**HEN the dismal winter time  
Comes, and, under shrouds of rime,  
Rattling their bare bones, the trees  
Shiver in the icy breeze  
In the black and haunted wood—  
Then I feel my dormouse blood!  
When the hunting owl awakes  
All the dormouse in me aches  
For long, long nestling in the dark,  
Soft bedded,  
Eyes lidded.

Let no spark  
From the dying sunlight glimmer  
Through the windows of my chamber  
As the shortening days grow dimmer.

Let no other mouse  
Squeak and rustle in the house;  
Hold no mirror to my lips;  
Touch not with your finger-tips  
Folded limbs or hooded hair;  
Only leave me lying there.

Till the spring  
Stir me with its whispering  
Let me sleep, ah, let me sleep,  
Deeper still . . . deep . . . deep . . .







## Diffident Clubman

I HAVE learned the rules by heart, and could recite the names of the general committee to the first challenger. Yet I enter the lofty vestibule nervously. In a club of deeply-rooted tradition it is not the written but the unwritten law that menaces the new member. This is my first unescorted visit, and at any moment I expect to trip over one of the roots.

My progress is checked by a strident cry. Have I barked my shins on some shibboleth already? If it is my maroon tie that is the trouble, I can explain that; the secretary is out of club-ties; I have written, I have telephoned . . . "Sir!"

It is an Irish voice, jagged and unbending, like a meat-saw. Turning with a pitiful attempt at nonchalance I see that it belongs to the porter, who regards me sternly over his rampart of half a century's misdirected correspondence.

"I'll be taking your bit of a bag," he announces.

I approach obediently and hand over my dispatch-case. He throws it on the floor. Now, my *Life of Chatham* is in that case. Am I within my rights to ask for it? I hope to write the review for a modest journal of limited circulation, and was planning to enter the library with the book in my hand to bolster up my self-assurance, now at its nadir. In a club where every other member is a professor or a Royal Academician the man who is neither needs a little support.

"There's a book in it," I falter.

"Is there now?" He stirs the case with his foot. "Ah-h, 'twill be safe with me here. Anywhere else in this place . . ." He shrugs, and goes off into a grinding mutter about the habits of members. Now I come to think of it I recall some appeals on the notice-board beginning: "Will the member who took my new black hat . . ."

When I modestly explain, he skims through the pages before handing it over. He does not seem to think very highly either of the book or of the review I am likely to write of it.

As I sidle round the great library door it creaks, drawing upon me every eye in the room. A member in the window coughs irritably. He has a famous face and I hide my *Life of Chatham* behind me. He may ask me what I think of it before I have looked in the *Dictionary of National Biography* to find out whether this is the Chatham whose eye could cut a diamond (it had

nothing on the eyes of the members here assembled) or the one who wanted a Bellamy's veal pie on his death-bed. It would be terrible to reveal that I scarcely know one Pitt from another.

The silence is absolute. I steal to a straight-backed chair, praying that when I rise to consult the dictionary I shall spot it quickly; otherwise my casual stroll to the shelves may bring me face to face with endless volumes of *The Gentleman's Magazine*, and I shall be stuck with one of them until dinner-time. One day I hope to learn the arrangement of the books, just as I hope to learn the portraits on the dining-room walls, and the identity of the twin-bearded person whose bust is on the magazine-table, a copy of *The Dickensian* balanced at the moment on his head. But the opportunities for such research are few and are contingent upon my being left alone in either room. I cannot imagine how members ever do find out these things; I have yet to see any of them studying the little brass plates, or, indeed, looking at the pictures at all.

I am still thinking these thoughts and reading the first page of my book repeatedly when somewhere a clock strikes seven. In silent accord all the members get up and go out. It is dinner-time, and I am just about to follow them when I realize that this is my big chance. With one eye on the door I creep stealthily towards the bust. The engraving on the pedestal is shallow; in the gathering dusk I cannot quite—

There is a roar from the far corner of the room. A small member who has been invisibly asleep is yawning at me over his chair-back. Like lightning I whip *The Dickensian* from the head of my unknown friend and spring back into my chair. The small member gives me such an odd look as he comes and takes a seat nearer the fire that I embark on a fantastic piece of mime, looking up references in *The Dickensian* and scribbling marginal notes in my *Life of Chatham* . . . I have reached the end of my invention, with Chatham and Rochester inextricably confused in my mind, when I see that the small member is asleep again, so I steal out and up the great staircase, feeling like an ant on the steps of St. Paul's.

It is the custom for casual diners to save the waiter's feet by sharing the big centre table, and although I would infinitely prefer to share a small table with Chatham I know that I must not. I stuff him in my pocket. As I stand

hesitantly one or two famous faces look up from their plates. I select a chair next to a dome-headed man, and it stops the scattered conversation by cracking deafeningly. All but the dome-headed man and myself are wearing club-ties, but as I read his name, neatly printed in the lid of his open spectacle-case, I see that he needs no such vindicating emblem; the name is world-famous, and when he speaks to me a moment later I am electrified with reverent pride.

"Trouble you for the mustard," he says.

He does not pursue the conversation. He is being promised an introduction to somebody by the man opposite, and appears grateful.

"Good of you," he says. "Do you know my name?"

I think at first that he is joking. But when the man opposite shakes his head he pushes the spectacle-case over with his knife-handle. The man opposite reads it perfunctorily and nods.

"No member of this club," says a sad man at the head of the table, "knows any other member. Never did."

All nod assent, including me. I am glad to include myself. Where nobody knows anybody everybody may be somebody, and I feel emboldened, so that when the dome-headed man prods a fragment of cold meat with his knife and says plaintively that he can't imagine where they get these cold pies from, a voice pipes up clearly:

"They're certainly not Bellamy's, that Pitt was so fond of."

It is my voice. Have I gone too far?

"Which Pitt?" says the man opposite.

I have gone too far. The silence is absolute.

Then the dome-headed man, whom I shall always love, says, "Don't know one Pitt from another. Never did."

"Does anybody?" asks the sad man, and adds, waving a fork over his shoulder—"One of these paintings is a Pitt, but heaven knows which."

"Which Pitt, or which painting?" says the small member who has just made a sleepy entrance.

"I didn't know," says the dome-headed man, picking pastry off his knees, "that anybody knew who any of the paintings were."

"Nobody does," says the sad man. And everybody sighs but me.

J. B. B.



"And we must remember the advent of winter evenings when we relax by our firesides."

### Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Salt of the Earth

TAULER is not one of the mediæval mystics quoted in Mr. ALDOUS HUXLEY's exposition of *The Perennial Philosophy* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 12/6); for Tauler taught that a soul turned Godward is like a taper carried out into the sunlight—it burns on, but its flame is "diffused and shed forth in the greater light." Most oriental mystics would deny the ultimate identity of the taper's little twinkle; and Mr. HUXLEY uses a pantheist like Eckhart to push the West a little nearer the East. His book aims at presenting the Highest Common Factor of all religions, in quotations from practitioners commented by himself. But although the Godhead is one, there is far more wrangle over its manifestations than about the means to beatitude. Those who modify their merely human mode of living become capable of more than human knowledge and "draw in the goods of eternity in order to give out the goods of time." (The reverse process, it is stressed, is not enjoying the success our single-minded application to it deserves.) One is grateful to Mr. HUXLEY for all the company he has assembled on his pilgrimage, even if one feels most at home with Arnold of Rugby and his "Christ who alone cannot be an idol or inspire idolatry."

H. P. E.

#### Sir Philip Gibbs

SIR PHILIP GIBBS, who made his name as a special correspondent in the war of 1914–1918, has given a delightfully written and unflinching account of his life in *The Pageant of the Years* (HEINEMANN, 18/-). Married at twenty-one, he does not appear to have been seriously handicapped by the youthful shyness and diffidence of which he speaks, for a year or two after his marriage he was editing a literary syndicate in Bolton, and contributing to *The Weekly Scotsman* a series of articles under the title "Knowledge is Power." A letter from Alfred Harmsworth brought him up to London, where, after a short spell as editor of the *Daily Mail* literary page, he resigned just in time to avoid being dismissed. As article editor on *The Tribune* he was gratified by a postcard from Marie Corelli, who wrote "You are the only gentleman in Fleet Street";

but a few days later a second postcard came from Miss Corelli, who now wrote "You are an unspeakable cad." Much the longest, and on the whole the most interesting, of the fifteen parts which constitute the book is the one devoted to the author's experiences as a war correspondent from the Mons retreat right through to the Armistice. The favoured position nowadays enjoyed by war correspondents had to be fought for by PHILIP GIBBS and his colleagues; for, as F. E. Smith remarked to the author, "those fellows at the War Office want a nice private war of their own, while our people are clamouring for news." H. K.

#### To a Richer Theatre

In *The Poet in the Theatre* (ROUTLEDGE, 10/6) Mr. RONALD PEACOCK traces the decline of poetic drama during the last century and examines the work of those writers who have either contributed to this form or else, although men of genius, have led other playwrights away from it. Of the latter Ibsen was the chief. He was a man of profoundly poetic imagination, but to do what he wanted to do he had to come down severely to earth. "His imitators," says Mr. PEACOCK, "whilst they had no need of making any such sacrificial descent, spread themselves in the prosaic realism that dried up poetry and style at the roots." Shaw, in whom T. S. Eliot declared the poet to have been still-born, took the drama still further away from poetry; he was influenced by Ibsen but preached more effectively because he employed comedy, not only contributing to it his perfection of the ingenious dodge of floodlighting the unreasonable person instead of the reasonable one—a point which Mr. PEACOCK develops well—but wrapping up the pill much more acceptably. In Eliot's resuscitation of the verse-form, his use of ritual and his masterly blending of the two into a modern pattern Mr. PEACOCK naturally sees fresh hope and great achievement. It is perhaps a pity that while finding space for Grillparzer and Hebbel, who mean little to English readers, he should omit so rare a combination of poet and man of the theatre as O'Casey. On the significance of Henry James's failure in the theatre he is very interesting, and Synge he brings into a sounder perspective than most critics have done. (Though when he writes him down a glorious cul-de-sac he ignores his continuing influence on Irish playwrights.) There is not much about the actual theatre in this book, the slant of which is literary; but there is much penetrating criticism of a refreshingly unwoolly character.

E. O. D. K.

#### Russian Literary Reminiscences

N. TELESHOV, described on the jacket of *A Writer Remembers* (HUTCHINSON, 18/-) as "a veteran Soviet writer," is in his late seventies, and as he met Gorki for the first time in 1899 and Chekhov as far back as 1887 he has a rich store of memories to draw upon. The gift of selecting the right memories, aesthetically valuable to autobiographers in the capitalist countries, is probably of considerable practical importance under the Soviet system. When Mr. TELESHOV thinks of the eighties he hears again "the drone of the priests combining to bring home to men's souls the beauty and desirability of autocratic rule." Chekhov is chiefly memorable to him because he foresaw in the coming years a great dawn of life, a happy, joyful future. Andreyev, who shortly after the revolution of 1917 "found himself the other side of the frontier" and remained there, is rendered palatable by his love for Maxim Gorki, in whose distinctively proletarian cast of features he discerned "a calm manly beauty." In the author's otherwise vivid account of peasants from the

middle regions of Russia trekking in Tsarist days to Siberia in search of better conditions eulogies of the present system of settling peasants are interspersed at regular intervals. His comparison of stage production in his youth and nowadays seems, however, to have dropped from a momentarily careless pen: "In the old days the producer was not the important man he is now . . . The actors settled things among themselves. The production was a kind of collective affair." H. K.

#### "Pacing Toward the Other Gole."

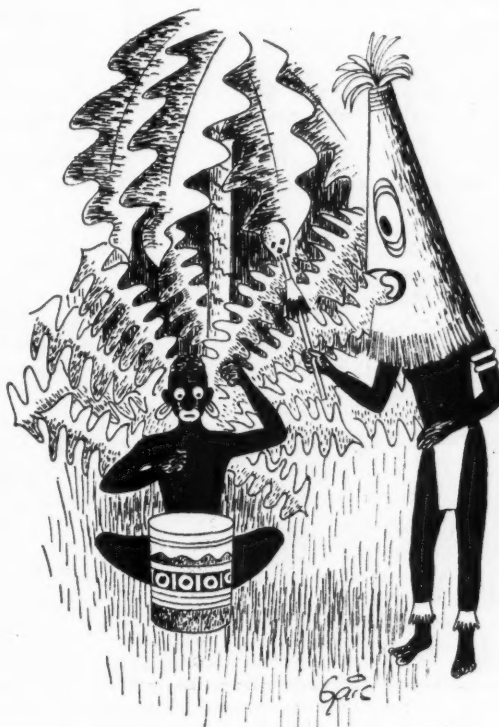
Mr. ROBERT HARLING takes the title of his second book, *The Steep Atlantick Stream* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/6), from Comus because he says the words "contain a picture more clear and sharp than many words could make" of that ocean that he came to know so well. His book, though, contains so many clear and sharp pictures that one wonders again at the power the sea seems to shed on so many tried and untried writers. Its first hundred pages are spent mainly in describing the characters of the officers and crew of the corvette *Tobias* in which the author was to make so many convoying trips, first from Halifax, then on the Iceland run, then from Gibraltar to Freetown and then back to the old waters before pneumonia caught him, sent him ashore for six months and so gave him another job which may, we hope, have produced material for a third book. For Mr. HARLING writes very well indeed, and observes closely and kindly. He gives, for instance, an excellent picture of an excellent commanding officer—"His mind was complex, given to caprice. His decisions were swift, direct and usually correct . . . He was quiet, efficient, unhurried and direct." It is interesting to notice that in writing of people he writes expansively as a civilian, but when dealing with sea adventures he becomes laconic—"The third night we lost two more ships." There are no heroics, but he gives us insight into the strain of convoy duty—"Attacks always came suddenly although always expected. The shock of that suddenness was made more emphatic by reason of our waiting." All these quotations are inadequate to describe the quality of the book, which has a very subtle flavour. The chapters on Iceland and an Icelandic poet make refreshing break in the voyages we share with the writer. B. E. B.

#### Nature in Aspic

Imprisoned in *The Country Diary of a Cheshire Man* (COLLINS, 12/6) is a moth, the Small Dusty Wave. If, lighting for the first time on this moth's name, its name alone enchants you, Mr. A. W. BOYD's richly detailed observations of birds, flowers, beasts and insects will reward and weary you. If, knowing all about the Dusty Wave, you check eagerly your own notes against his, here is your master. A master of such calibre that he notes in a diary entry for September 1939 his conviction that, if Hitler were an ornithologist, he would surely have postponed making war until the autumn bird-migrations had been completed. To go through these diary notes of a naturalist—hundreds of them, made between February 1933 and September 1945 (reprinted here from the author's contributions to *The Manchester Guardian*), is like wandering through a natural history museum. The birds are stuffed in realistic attitudes; the butterflies are under glass; the flowers pressed between the leaves of a lavishly annotated sketch-book, their colours as they were in life meticulously recorded on the margin. There are felicities of description here and there; no country-lover can dip into these pages without profit; the photographs are superb. R. C. S.

#### A Varied Life

The career of Mr. ROGER ECKERSLEY has been full of incident. For some forty years, before his brother Peter made him join the B.B.C., his life was one long series of misfortunes, narrated cheerfully in *The B.B.C. and All That* (SAMPSON LOW, 10/6). A cousin of the Huxley brothers, he complains that he was always expected to rival them in cleverness—which was absurd. Sent up for a Charterhouse scholarship he was invited to go back and try for the entrance examination. He promised to become one of that school's notable footballers, but wrenched his knee badly, which led to a lot of trouble later. Then came a holiday in the Lake district, and he climbed Skiddaw while suffering from "a pleuritic spot"—at the cost of an attack of infantile paralysis. Something had to be done to earn money, so he made an arrangement with a friend to work together on half commission for a stockbroking firm. He had bought a car—an early De Dion Bouton—for £85, and was thinking of getting married, but caught the foot of his bad leg on some obstruction and fell heavily on his knee. This nearly resulted in the loss of his leg altogether. Sir Alfred Fripp told him that he was lucky to be alive and would probably have a stiff knee for the rest of his life. Undefeated, he decided on an open-air life, got into touch with H. S. Colt, of golfing fame, and was offered the secretaryship of the Littlehampton Golf Club at £100 a year. On this he got married and promptly collided on his Douglas motor-bike with a carriage and pair, head-on. However, he survived, to be invited to Stoke Poges, on a bigger salary. Finally, in February 1924, he walked into the old B.B.C. at Savoy Hill. He has plenty to say about his time there; but the "All That" part is the best. L. W.



"11121XX1122X"



## Quiet Spanner

"GUESS what I've got here," croaked a sharp-eyed man in spectacles when I opened my new street door. He patted an enormous roll of thick paper.

"Peace treaty?" I ventured.

"No. Just moved in, haven't you?" he asked.

"Yes. Why?"

"These here prefab houses unbolt, you know," he hinted significantly.

"What do you mean?"

"What I say—they unbolt. It's my own idea. I unbolt 'em and do 'em up different, according to taste. Take a look at these."

I let him unroll his drawings on my dining-table. He waved a spanner at the drawing on top.

"Now there's a beauty," he said. "An extry bedroom—bolts on to your existing prefab, fits over the back door. Price very reasonable. I could fix that up to-night."

"To-night?"

"Yes. I always works at night. I has to. You won't hear me—I'm dead quiet with a spanner. When you wake up in the morning, there it is—all bolted up."

I shook my head and he turned to another drawing.

"This might suit you, being a horsy sort of gent. A stable, Scots baronial style, with a sink. Very nice, that. No? Then here's something real ambitious. Campanile—find your own bells, otherwise all complete. Playful treatment—nice proportions too."

Just then we were interrupted by a loud knocking. On my way to the door I noticed him hurriedly rolling up his drawings. This time I knew my caller. It was the building foreman, a big ex-Commando.

"Have you got Inigo Jones in here?" he shouted. "Little chap with a roll of plans?" I turned in time to see Inigo Jones speeding through my back door into the night.

"I followed him here," stormed the foreman. "Don't you have nothing to do with him. He's messing this estate about. He works at night, so we don't catch him. I come on the

job this morning, and there was one of our prefabs with a upstairs bathroom bolted on, all done with our material."

"Surely it lends variety——"

"You don't understand, sir," he interrupted passionately. "All these prefabs is done to a pattern. That's where they get their beauty from. Harmony of style. You don't want this estate looking like Regent Street, do you?"

"Certainly not," I said meekly.

"That's not all. Yesterday morning we found a pagoda, and the council thinks I done it. I had a very nasty note from the surveyor—very nasty. But I'll stop him. I'll lay in wait for him."

He rushed into the night, seeking Inigo Jones, as he called him. That was a week ago. Since then I have been awakened several times by running feet, and last night I am certain I heard distant rifle-fire—rapid.

In view of this I note with misgiving a sudden change in the foreman. I found him this morning watching his men dismantle what appeared to be an old (prefab) Dutch windmill. He gave no sign of annoyance. In fact he was singing quietly to himself with a smile on his lips.

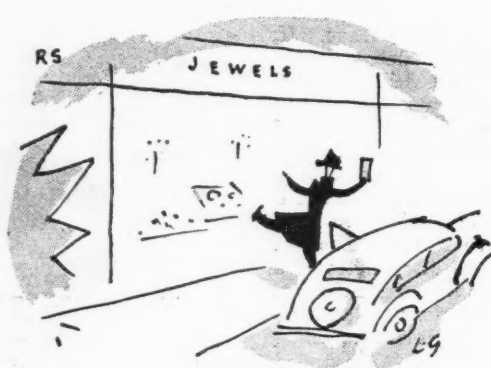
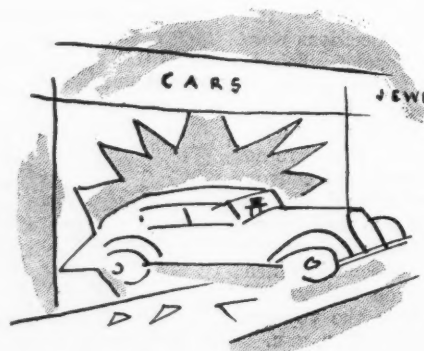
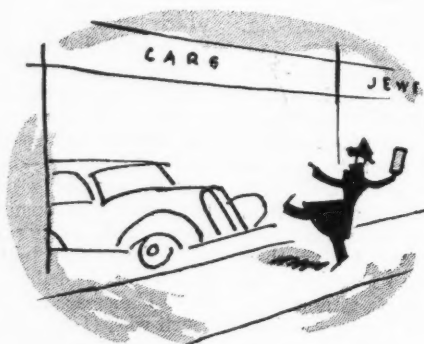
It was very strange. I thought of the rifle-fire and frowned.

"Have you seen Inigo Jones lately?" I asked coldly.

"Inigo Jones, sir?" he beamed. I thought he overdid it slightly. "Why, bless you, didn't you know? He died years ago. Great architect he was, too."

He must have known I didn't mean *that* Inigo Jones. I fixed him with a long searching glare, but his eyes met mine with such childlike innocence that I said no more.

All the same, I don't like the look of it.



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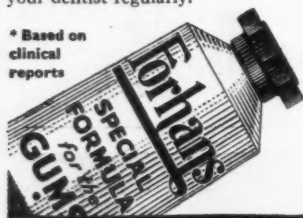


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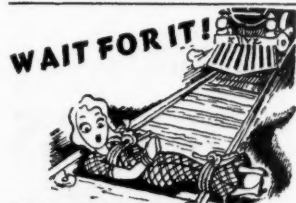


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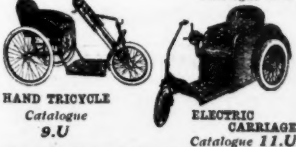


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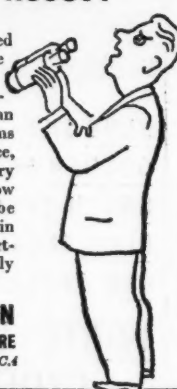
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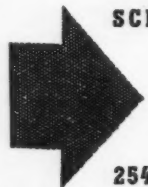


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